Dudley
CHRONICLE

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TRAGIC END TO FAMILY'S SEARCH

Report By Richard Guttridge

THE family of missing man Matthew Gill said they are suffering 'unbearable sadness' as it was confirmed he had been found dead.

A seven-week hunt for the 43-year-old from Stourbridge ended on Sunday afternoon as his family received the news they had been dreading.

The body of Mr Gill was found in woodland off Prestwood Drive, near Stourton, close to where his car had been found weeks earlier. It brought a tragic end to the search for Mr Gill who had not been seen since leaving his home at 9am on October 6. Police said his death was not being treated as suspicious.

His disappearance sparked the Find Liggy appeal, which saw friends and family carry out searches after Mr Gill's silver Smart Roadster car has been found off the A449 at Prestwood.

Matthew Gill

Mr Gill's devastated partner, Annette Woodhouse, said in a statement: "It is with unbearable sadness that we must let you know that our search for Matt is over. At this awful time, we would really appreciate you giving Matt's family and friends time to come to terms with this news and to grieve in private."

Ms Woodhouse recognised the incredible effort that had been made to find her partner since he vanished.

Remember

She added: "Matt has inadvertently created something extraordinary at the end of his life. Please always remember how he pulled everyone together, friends and strangers.

"To honour Matt's memory please always remain kind and look out for others. We will never forget your contribution."

Wolves and West Bromwich Albion also joined the appeal to find Albion fan Mr Gill by showing his image on big screens at their football grounds.

Colleagues from B&Q in Kidderminster, where Mr Gill worked, had also helped by distribution posters nationwide. Kingswinford truck firm JJX Logistics had place a huge 'missing' poster on the side of one of its lorries.

STAMP OF APPROVAL FOR ARWEN'S CHRISTMAS BOX

With school friends at the special postbox decorated in her honour, 10-year-old Arwen Wilson holds a copy of her stamp design

A SCHOOLGIRL from Dudley who won the Royal Mail Christmas stamp design contest, has had a postbox specially designed to honour her success.

Arwen Wilson, aged 10, created a snow people scene which features on the 2nd class stamp this festive season.

The postbox in Dudley Street has been decorated with a specially-designed wrap featuring her stamp. It will remain in place throughout Christmas and the New Year.

Arwen, a pupil at St Chad's Catholic Primary School in Dudley, said: "I am very excited that my local postbox is being covered with my stamp, as I will see it every day and people will know that it is my design."

Since winning the competition, Arwen visited Clarence House to receive a prize and congratulations from Prince Charles, who helped judge the competition. A special postmark also included her name.

CHRISTMAS

Strictly star will be switching on the town's festive lights

TELEVISION and radio presenter Alison Hammond will switch on Dudley's Christmas lights this weekend.

The This Morning and Strictly Come Dancing star will be doing the honours in Market Place at around 5pm on Saturday.

Birmingham-born celebrity Alison Hammond

The 42-year-old Brummie former Big Brother contestant will be playing the Fairy Godmother at Malvern Festival Theatre panto Cinderella from December 14 to January 7.

SHOOTING

Hunt on for suspect after gun goes off

POLICE are hunting a suspect after a man was left with serious head injuries and another was shot in the arm when violence flared in Stourbridge at the weekend.

It is understood that trouble started after a man arrived at an address in Vauxhall Road armed with a gun in the early hours of Saturday. The weapon is said to have gone off accidentally, wounding a 39-year-old man in the arm.

A 24-year-old man received serious head injuries in a fracas and was taken to hospital where his condition was said to be improving.

Three men and a woman were arrested at the scene but later released without charge.

Anyone with information is urged to call police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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STATUS QUO – AFTER RICK

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Under threat refuse tip could be saved

A TIP earmarked for the axe could be rescued after it emerged it could be bought by Dudley Council.

The authority is considering approaching Wolverhampton Council about the possibility of taking over the Anchor Lane site near Coseley, which is due to shut.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley revealed running Anchor Lane was an option being considered to provide a tip for people living in the north of the borough.

He said the move could also mean retaining Stourbridge tip and scrapping plans to find a new main dump for Dudley.

Wolverhampton Council wants to shut its two tips, which include Anchor Lane, in order to create a 'super dump' in the city.

But the closure would create a problem in Dudley, where the council currently pays Wolverhampton so its residents can use the facilities.

Central

Dudley leaders announced plans to close the Stourbridge tip on Birmingham Road earlier this year when Labour were in charge as it wanted to find a more central location in the borough.

However, proposals to make the Leys Road depot in Brierley Hill the main tip ran into difficulty when it was subsequently ruled out when the Conservatives took control of the council in May. Councillor Harley said a deal with Wolverhampton Council remained as just one option and no discussions had yet been held.

He said: "We are inquiring as to whether we could purchase that site and still retain Stourbridge.If we could retain Wolverhampton and charge them to use it, it would pay for itself."

Oliver Bhurrut, a spokesman for Wolverhampton Council, said discussions into the future of the city's waste sites were ongoing.

He said: "The future of our two existing tips is very much part of these deliberations."

Patient wins payout over surgery blunder

A FATHER from Dudley has received a five-figure payout after he suffered a cardiac arrest when an anaesthetist left the operating theatre as he was undergoing surgery.

Adam Bennett, aged 48, had gone to Russells Hall Hospital for routine surgery when he went into cardiac arrest, forcing the procedure to be abandoned. Russells Hall has apologised after the incident sparked an investigation and resulted in legal action.

Adam Bennett

The anaesthetist was subsequently disciplined and referred to the General Medical Council over the 'inexcusable' blunder. Lawyers claimed that if the doctor had been present at the time of the cardiac arrest, drugs could have been administered, which could have prevented it and ensured the surgery continued.

Mr Bennett, from Lower Gornal, had been left unattended for two minutes during urology surgery.

Lessons

He said he was stunned when he found out what had happened during surgery in April 2015, after having put his 'faith' in the medical team. He insisted he wanted 'lessons to be learned'.

He said: "If everything had gone to plan I should have been out of hospital that day, but I needed days in hospital to recover and another procedure booked in for July."

Diane Wake, chief executive of the Dudley Group NHS Trust, apologised to Mr Bennett and said: "We accept that the temporary absence of the anaesthetist during Adam Bennett's procedure was inexcusable and that if he had been present the situation would have been managed differently."

Pupils learn about football legend

Ten-year-old pupils Kyle Tyler, Daanyal Khaliqand Jacob Wojtoqicz learn about Duncan Edwards

PUPILS at Duncan Edwards' old school were given a history lesson on the footballing icon as the 60th anniversary of the Munich air disaster approaches.

Pupils at Priory Primary School in Dudley were given a special assembly about the life of Manchester United and England footballer Duncan, who was born in Dudley and went to the school. He was one of eight United players, part of the famous 'Busby Babes' team, who died as a result of the 1958 air crash in Munich, which claimed the lives of 23 people, including club officials, air crew and journalists.

Headteacher Jill Craig, also a former pupil at the school, said: "Duncan is a perfect example of someone from Dudley who achieved great things. We hope the event will inspire our children to chase their own dreams."

The assembly was held by Jim Cadman as part of a series of events ahead of the anniversary in February.

Duncan was captain of the school football team, one of the most successful in the Black Country when he attended during the 1940s.

He went to be regarded as one of England's greatest, despite his career being cut short by tragedy. Sir Bobby Charlton described him as the best player he had ever played with. Duncan died from his injuries sustained in the crash which happened in bad weather as the team returned from a European Cup match in Yugoslavia.

Telephone boxes face the chop

MORE than 100 telephone boxes are facing the axe across the region with Dudley borough the worst hit part of the Black Country.

Figures show that in Dudley 18 are set for the chop, while in Wolverhampton 11 are to go, 14 in Sandwell, and 17 each across South Staffordshire and Wyre Forest are under threat.

Telephone boxes still handle 33,000 calls a day throughout the country but BT are planning to remove around 20 000 in the next five years.

But the telecoms provider must inform the public and consult with the local authorities if they plan to shut them down. Councils then have 90 days to object, which is known as a 'local veto'.

BT say the rise of mobile phones is making phone boxes redundant.

But Wolverhampton Liberal Democrats are calling on councils to use the veto. They say the booths are still used by children, the elderly, people who can't afford mobile phones and in emergency when phone batteries go flat.

Campaigner Paul Butters said: "I'm really seeing red over these plans to axe something vital from our streets. Rather than removing these phone boxes BT should focus on making sure everyone can access a phone signal wherever they live."

Hundreds sign road petition

A PETITION signed by hundreds calling for action on a road where a mother was killed has been handed to Dudley Council chiefs.

MP Ian Austin and residents living on or near Wood Road, Lower Gornal, are demanding safety measures following the horror smash which killed 30-year-old Vikki Jones in September. It comes after a survey of residents found many were worried about their safety due to the speed of vehicles.

Mr Austin, Labour MP for Dudley North, said: "After the tragic fatal accident on Wood Road many people got in touch asking for action to tackle speeding cars. Hundreds of residents have signed a petition demanding measures to prevent anything like this ever happening again."

MP to open church festival of trees

ST Michael's Church in Brierley Hill will have its Christmas Tree Festival opened on Saturday by Dudley South MP Mike Wood at 11am.

The festival is free of charge to attend and will be open from until 1pm on Saturday.

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Arrest after dog thrown to its death from balcony

A TEENAGER has been arrested on suspicion of animal cruelty after a dog was thrown to his death from a balcony of a flat in Tividale.

The Staffordshire bull terrier was found at the foot of an 18-storey residential tower block.

Signs put up at the scene in Wallace Close, by the RSPCA, stated that the pet 'fell to its death from one of the balconies' at about 6pm on November 8.

Following a joint investigation, West Midlands Police said a 19-year-old man was being questioned on Monday about the incident.

A resident at the council-owned tower block, who declined to be named, said a woman had found the dog lying outside Darley House tower and called the police.

She added that the animal had 'belonged to a nice old couple' and described what had happened as 'awful'.

A police spokeswoman said: "Officers have arrested a 19-year-old man on suspicion of animal cruelty after a dog was found thrown over a flat balcony.

"Upon arrival, officers found the deceased dog and began investigations into tracing the owner.."

Andy Robbins, regional media manager, said: "The RSPCA would like to thank members of the local community following a positive response to an appeal for information."

Woman's leg was broken in collision

A WOMAN was hit by a car in the Black Country, suffering a broken leg.

The victim was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham after being hit at the junction of Bunns Lane and Birmingham New Road, near Tividale, close to the busy Burnt Tree junction.

The Midlands Air Ambulance landed near the scene but the injured woman was eventually taken to hospital by land ambulance.

The accident happened on Firday at around 1.40pm and led to traffic delays in the area.

West Midlands Ambulance spokesman Jamie Arrowsmith said: "We treated one patient for a leg fracture. She was fully concious and was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital."

Order is doubled

A BRIERLEY Hill company making hardtops for pick-up trucks is celebrating after an order was doubled in size. Truckman is supplying 50 more of its RS Hardtops for rental group Europcar UK's Toyota Hilux fleet.

Call to hurry up demolition of 'eyesore'

Cavendish House – to be bulldozed

AN EYESORE office block in Dudley town centre, dubbed a health and safety hazard, needs to be demolished as soon as possible, says Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley

Councillor Harley said a planning application to knock down Cavendish House is expected before Christmas.

He says the empty building is the final hurdle in the way of multi-million regeneration plans to redevelop Dudley town centre, which will tie into the arrival of the Midland Metro and expansion of Dudley bus station.

"Dudley Council and the developer are at one in believing the building needs to be demolished as soon as possible," he said. "I think it is a real health and safety issue."

The site is expected to be used for a multi-million-pound development consisting of retail, leisure and commercial enterprises.

It will tie into the Midland Metro tram line being brought to Dudley town centre as part of the network's extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill. Dudley bus station is also set to be expanded to create an interchange with the tram line.

A planning application for demolition was expected earlier this month but councillor Harley says the complexity of the project had caused delays.

He added: "As soon as the demolition takes place, people will believe we are really going to spend money on revamping the town centre.

"We will be able to get on with the job."

He expects the demolition to take place 'early next year'.

The former office block, on Trindle Road, has been empty for years.

Woman who hid killer is jailed for six years

A WOMAN from Dudley who sheltered the man who murdered teenager Kenichi Phillips is starting a six-year prison sentence.

Shaleana Samuels, 25, hid Isaiah Wright-Young at her flat in Dixon Green Road for nine days in October last year. He wore a burka on his arrival to disguise his identity from CCTV cameras.

She had previously denied the offence and three unrelated counts of possession with intent to supply drugs but later admitted she had told police a pack of lies and on Monday pleaded guilty to all four offences.

Wright-Young, 36, was jailed for life in April for the fatal shooting of Mr Phillips as he sat in a parked car in the Ladywood area of Birmingham in March last year.

Shaleana Samuels

The killer was discovered at Samuels' flat by police seven months later. His co-accused Disharn Downie, 18, was jailed for 21 years.

Police also found crack cocaine, heroin and cannabis at the flat, some in Samuels' bedroom and some hidden behind a panel in her kitchen, with a total street value of £8,230. Mobile phones showing evidence of drug dealing and £2,805 cash were also discovered.

Samuels, of Elmbridge Way, who was studying for a healthcare apprenticeship, initially told police she had no idea that Wright-Young was involved in anything criminal and allowed him to stay after he told her he'd had a row with his girlfriend. She later claimed she knew he was involved in criminality but was not aware he was wanted for murder. Changing her story yet again, Samuels said she was pressurised by an ex-boyfriend who was in prison to provide a refuge for Wright-Young.

Judge Patrick Thomas, QC, said he did not believe she did not know Isaiah-Young was wanted for murder but accepted she was influenced by her former boyfriend with whom she was still infatuated.

It's animal magic for zoo workers

Apprentices Mary Taylor, of Stourbridge and Harry Upton, from Halesowen, have joined the zoo full-time

APPRENTICES Harry Upton and Mary Taylor have landed full-time jobs at Dudley Zoo.

The pair have secured their dream jobs as trainee keepers after impressing zoo bosses with their hardworking attitude since joining the team at the Castle Hill attraction at the start of the year.

Harry, from Halesowen, said: "When I was told I'd got the job it was easily one of the happiest moments of my life." The 21 year-old works on the zoo farm and has moved into on-site staff quarters.

He added: "I'm looking forward to the opportunity of working with different kinds of animals during my career, although for the moment, I'm very happy working with the camels."

Mary, from Stourbridge, said: "It's so amazing as zoo keeping is something I've always wanted to do." The 17 year-old has recently moved from our bird section to join the ungulates team.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Police appealing for witnesses

POLICE continue to appeal for witnesses over two vicious attacks which saw people aged in their 60s and 70s assaulted in Dudley last month.

A 64-year-old man was severely beaten and tied up with wire during a robbery at the Black Bear pub in Lower Gornal. Two masked men who were armed entered the property early on November 12 and made off with cash. The following day a 75-year-old man was hospitalised after being stabbed in the shoulder while walking in Kings Street, Dudley.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said: "Enquiries are ongoing and we are still appealing for witnesses."

Strong ale is toast of beer festival

DUDLEY Town Hall was packed over the three days of the annual Dudley Winter Ales Fair.

The 33rd annual event, run by the Dudley and South Staffordshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale, was opened by Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler. It offered more than 80 beers as well as bottled international beers and real cider and perry.

The beer of the festival winner was Full Centurion, a 10 per cent strength beer from Kinver Brewery with Marston's taking second place with 7.6 per cent brew Owd Rodger.

Geologist's work is recognised

WORK promoting the heritage under the Black Country has led to Dudley Council's geologist being honoured.

Graham Worton, who has worked for Dudley Council for 17 years, has also been closely involved with Dudley Museum for more than 35 years.

Mr Worton has been awarded the Brighton Medal, awarded every three years to a geological curator by the outgoing chair of the Geological Curators' Group. Mr Worton said: "I must share this award with all the colleagues, volunteers, visitors and students I have worked with."

Hang out with Hang Ups star at club night

COMEDIAN Tom Wrigglesworth, from BBC Radio 4 show Hang Ups, tops the bill for a Christmas comedy special night in Stourbridge.

Wrigglesworth headlines the bill at the Fitz of Laughter Comedy Club held at Katie Fizgerald's pub tomorrow night. Also features are Aaron Twitchen, Riordan Patrick, Morgan Rees and Rory Jones.

Dudley's Wayne Beese hosts and tickets cost £10.

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COUNTY NEWS

Search on for best bus drivers

THE search is on to recognise the region's best bus drivers. Arriva wants to say a huge thank you to the bus drivers who provide such a vital service to passengers in the Black Country and Staffordshire.

The annual Made A Difference (M.A.D) awards aim to celebrate the work done by Arriva staff and thank individuals for their hard work.

If nominated, your local bus driver could be invited to a glamorous gala dinner to find Arriva's Bus Driver of the Year . To nominate, visit www.arrivabus.co.uk/doty, with the first round of nominations closing on Friday December 15.

Big otter-tunity to join wildlife study

A WILDLIFE trust is looking for volunteer otter spotters to help survey the River Stour.

Hannah Lewis, from the Birmingham and the Black Country trust, recently discovered signs of otters at a housing development. It is the first time signs of otters have been spotted at the location. Now the Trust wants to survey the river to see where otter populations are thriving to get an idea of which parts of the Stour are in good health – and which are not.

Anyone who ishes to volunteer to become an otter spotter across various locations on the River Stour can call Hannah on 0121 523 0094.

Foreigner foray for blues star Jo

BLACK Country blues star Joanne Shaw Taylor is set to support rock icons Foreigner on their upcoming UK tour. She will also be joined by artist John Parr at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on May 15.

The artist is also set to headline the Saturday of Planet Rockstock in Trecco Bay on December 2.

The Wednesbury-born guitarist will appear alongside the likes of Monster Truck, Dan Reed Network, King King and Thunder.

Toolstation branch opens for business

TOOLSTATION has announced the opening of a new branch in the West Midlands.

The new Toolstation is at Unit 2, Ionic Business Park, Birmingham New Road, Dudley. It is open for business seven days a week, from 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 4pm Sundays. Previously located in Great Bridge, all business and employees transferred to Dudley.

1. Tink often stops to say hello to Bob the goldfish

2. Teddy's confused between a dovecote and a dove cat

3. African pygmy hedgehog Flossy in her woolly nest

4. Bear loves to bite toes and chase around the garden

5. Tortoise Fred lives in the garden and just loves eating buttercups on the lawn

6. Bags of room in here – Benji finds this is a comfortable place to bed down

7. Together – four-year-old guinea pigs Billy and Tom share a very special bond

8. Reeves and Mortimer who were always up to mischief when they were kittens

9. Olaf the rabbit was found in a carrier bag in a tree. Here he is with best friend Anya

10. Milo, a Staffie cross, came from the Dogs Trust and loves doing agility tricks

YOUR TIME TO VOTE

WELL the time has come for you readers to have your say.

For weeks we have been bombarded by lovely pictures of your treasured pets – and we thank everyone for taking the time to send in all the wonderful entries.

We have already carried some of the entries in our weekly pets competition page throughout all our seven editions.

There was so much choice it was difficult for us to pick out the final 10 for the shortlist.

Variety

All of them so cute and obviously so loved. The pride shone through in the emails we received – some sending in more than one picture of their special pet.

The variety of pets has been huge – lots of cats and dogs, turtles, ponies, hamsters, tortoise etc. Noah could have filled his ark several times over!

But now it is decision time. On the right is the voting form with all the details our readers need to let us know which is their favourite.

We will carry the pictures again next week and the winner will be announced next month with the best-loved picture carried on the front of our Christmas editions. And the winner will also receive a £100 cash prize.

We are not just looking for the cutest pet – although some are very difficult to resist – but the best picture itself, one that you would pick out if you saw it in the paper.

So look closely at the 10 shortlisted pictures and choose the one you think deserves the prize.

We will be counting up the votes after the second week of running the shortlist. Entries must be in by Monday, December 12.

This is your chance to have your say!

ANIMAL CRACKERS

To vote for your favourite photograph either email the picture number to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk or tick one box on this form and send it to Sue Attwater, The Chronicle, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

PICTURE 1 ☐ PICTURE 2 ☐ PICTURE 3 ☐ PICTURE 4 ☐ PICTURE 5 ☐

PICTURE 6 ☐ PICTURE 7 ☐ PICTURE 8 ☐ PICTURE 9 ☐ PICTURE 10 ☐

Mother's gift helps with grief

THE heartbroken mum of a stillborn baby has donated a special cot to a hospital to help other grieving parents.

Kiera Pooler, from Brierley Hill, raised enough cash to pay for the £1,600 device which she handed over to the neonatal department at City Hospital in Birmingham.

The CuddleCot is a portable device that circulates cold air around babies who are stillborn or die shortly afer birth, to allow parents precious time to be with their baby before leaving the hospital.

Kiera was 27 weeks pregnant when she found out her son, who she named Rogan-Lee, had died.

Both Kiera and her partner Jake Hildred, aged 22, got to spend time with their baby after he was born at Russells Hall Hospital, in Dudley, because it had a CuddleCot.

Healthy

The 21-year-old, who has since had a healthy baby girl called Leila-Mai, now aged 15 months, explained: "Jake and I were able to have that extra time with Rogan-Lee after he was born, and it meant so much to us.

"My family also got to see him. However, at the time, there was only one device there and there were five other parents who had babies that were born sleeping that day."

Since the tragedy more than two years ago, Kiera has carried out various activities to raise the money.

She added: "Once I had raised enough money Sands (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity) put a call out to find out which hospitals were in need of the cot. City Hospital came forward and so I was delighted to make the donation to them."

Burglar jailed for 20 months

HOODED burglars battered their way into a ground floor flat with a crow bar, a judge heard.

The raiders broke a lounge window and climbed in to the Western Road, Stourbridge property, Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting, told Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

The man who lived at the flat ran away before the intruders could reach him. "They then thought better of it after breaking a TV that was in the room," continued the prosecutor.

Police forensic checks on blood found by the broken window matched it with the DNA of 35-year-old Danny Boden from Chapel Street, Wordsley, who also tested positive for cocaine.

Boden, who had several previous convictions, admitted burglary and was jailed for one year eight months.

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Projects get vital boost of £130,000 in funding

TWO major developments have moved a step closer after crucial funding to get them off the ground was agreed.

Up to 450 homes are to be built at the Bilston Urban Village site, while a £30 million university centre will be created in Dudley, under ambitious plans to transform the region.

Members of Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership voted to award more than £130,000 to allow site investigations to begin for both projects. Preparations are anticipated to start next year.

The Bilston homes plan would see hundreds of homes to be built on brownfield sites alongside around 34 acres of land which has been earmarked for public open space and nature conservation.

Engineering

Dudley College's centre is set to provide a major boost for skills in the Black Country, providing the expertise needed by local industry.

The facility would offer degree-level training in engineering, manufacturing and transport technology.

Chief Executive for the Black Country ConsortiumSarah Middleton said: "This bid will augment the existing skills provision in the Black Country region in that it will provide specialist training facilities that respond directly to the needs of local industry."

Hit-and-run charges denied

A 28-year-old man has pleaded not guilty to dangerous driving and causing grievous bodily harm after a suspected hit-and-run near a Stourbridge primary school.

Kevin Campbell, of Vickers Walk, Stourbridge, has been released on bail and will next appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on December 20. He was charged with eight offences relating to September 19, 2016, on Hob Green Road near to Hob Green Primary where two three-year-old children and two adults were hurt.

Campbell appeared at Walsall Magistrates' Court last week charged with one count of driving a motor vehicle dangerously and seven of attempting to cause grievous bodily harm. He pleaded not guilty to each offence.

Santa at Hillcrest

HILLCREST School and Community College in Netherton holds a Christmas fair tomorrow afternoon (Friday), from 3.30 to 5.30. There will be a special appearance by Santa and his Elves. Hot turkey cobs available.

New bosses are needed to run venue

Inside Cornbow Hall at Halesowen

COUNCIL bosses are looking for community groups to take over Halesowen's Cornbow Hall as part of cost-cutting plans totalling nearly £100,000.

Dudley Council says the move will save tax-payer's £96,000 a year and breathe new life into the Hagley Street venue.

The business plan is based on an a similar venture at Brierley Hill Civic Hall, which has seen the landmark building revitalised after a community group took over its day-to-day running. That venue now attracts big names from the comedy world. But council bosses are warning applicants must show a strong business plan to ensure the site remains secured for future generations.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for planning and economic development, said: "We have some fantastic community groups using the Cornbow Hall now for popular events and it is only right we look to build on that.

"A community group running the venue could give this venue fresh impetus to bring in new acts which will in turn help bring even more people to the town. We have already proven this approach can be very successful with Brierley Hill Civic Hall going from strength to strength.

"But it is important we find the right group who share our vision."

The chosen group would organise shows and other events at the venue while the council keeps ownership of the building. Groups have until December 15 to register an interest. Visit www.dudley.gov.uk for more details.

College show interest in Hippodrome site

THE saga over Dudley Hippodrome took another twist when Dudley College confirmed it was interested in the landmark building's Castle Hill site, if current plans to revive it as a venue fail.

But college bosses admit they have no interest in preserving the 1938-built theatre and would purely be striking a deal for the site next to Dudley Zoo.

Black Country Hippodrome Ltd, a group dedicated to rescuing and reviving the former venue, have been given a lease on the building by Dudley Council.

They stepped in to save the historic venue, which in its heyday hosted such stars as Laurel and Hardy, when it was revealed that a previous council administration wanted to bulldoze the site and use it as public open space.

But the group faces a tough task raising funds and is now waiting to discover whether its request for a 20-year extension to the five year lease, which they say is necessary to attract the required investment, will be accepted.

Discussions

Meanwhile college principal Lowell Williams has held informal discussions with council officers regarding the site's future.

College spokeswoman Debbie Goode said land at Castle Hill would be ideal for the college's plans, which include a £30 million university centre to provide skills needed by local industry.

Ms Goode explained: "The college hasn't got an interest in running the Hippodrome but the land it sits on is part of the whole development corridor."

Steve Daniels, of the Black Country Hippodrome group, said: "They can talk to who they want but it's not ethical when we are going in there. It's not how you do business."

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for planning and economic development, said: "We have had an informal conversation with Dudley College, who have made it clear they may be interested in the site, should it ever become available."

Pitch perfect investment at stadium

Councillor Ian Kettle at the Dell Stadium, where work is under way on a 3G artificial football pitch

WORK has begun on a new artificial football pitch costing £660,000 in Dudley.

It is being provided at the Dell Stadium in Pensnett and will replace the previous artificial grass pitch, which had been used for 18 years.

Dudley Council says the facility will be in use for many years to come, thanks to the project funded by the Football Association and Football Foundation, which gave £550,000, and the council, which invested £110,000.

Work on the pitch started last week and should last for around three months.

Existing users have been temporarily relocated to other sites in the borough and the Saturday morning ParkRun has been suspended for the duration of the works,

Councillor Ian Kettle said it was part of the council's wider investment in leisure services.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rotala in £2m Hotel Hoppa deal

TIVIDALE-BASED bus and coach operator Rotala has conditionally agreed to buy National Express's Hotel Hoppa business for £2 million.

The passenger transport business operates between Heathrow Airport and hotels within a five-mile radius.

The acquisition includes the right to use the business' name, its goodwill, contracts and a fleet of 32 buses.

The £2m is to be funded from Rotala's existing resources adn the firm expects sales of £6m from the acquisition and pre-tax profit of £200,000 in the first full year of ownership.

Rotala operates the Diamond Bus services around the Black Country.

Groups to help the vulnerable

BLACK Country churches and charities are coming together to support vulnerable families.

Love Black Country wants to help churches to deal with the needs of families by linking individuals in congregations with the experts ready to help them.

In what is believed to be the first initiative of its kind in the UK, Love Black Country is working with four charities – Home For Good, Safe Families For Children, YMCA Open Door and Transforming Lives For Good. See loveblackcountry.org website.

Plenty of laughs at comedy nights

THERE'S a funny week ahead with controversial comic Jerry Sadowitz at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms tomorrow (Friday) and Ed Byrne at the city's Wulfrun Hall on Saturday. Russell Brand talks about fatherhood and much more besides at the Symphony Hall on Tuesday.

The next Live At The Civic night at Brierley Hill is on February 17, a double bill featuring Justin Moorhouse and Gary Delaney. Also on the bill are Scott Bennett, Lindsey Santoro and MC Waybe Beese. Early bird tickets are £10, see www.bhillcivic.co.uk

Pub festive market for Make A Wish charity

A PUB in Dudley is to host at Christmas market to raise money for seriously ill children.

There will be more than 20 stalls selling gifts at the Branford Arms on Park Road, Woodsetton,on Saturday, December 9. Entry is free.

Money raised by the event will be donated to the Make a Wish Foundation, which helps makes dreams come true for children suffering from serious illness.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

No way is student chav party 'classist'

WHEN I read that a group of students at Birmingham University were organising a chav-themed Christmas party, my initial thought was "where can I get a ticket?"

Getting blinged up, putting on a bit of fake sportswear and expressing dubious social attitudes, sounds a right lark.

Not everyone is amused, though, it seems. English student Gina Murfin lodged a formal complaint, saying the event was "so blatantly classist and distasteful it's difficult to know even know where to begin."

She also accused her fellow students of "making fun of a demonised and marginalised area of society." Not one for overdoing the hyperbole then?

A few things spring to mind. First of all, what has it got to do with class? Moreover, don't you need to possess a certain amount of money to truly embrace chav culture?

For example, all that gold jewellery doesn't come cheap, particularly the way the commodities markets have gone over the past decade. And quaffing all that strong lager, have they not seen alcohol duty lately? And that's before we get to the sugar tax. Former lottery winner Mickey Carrol styled himself King of Chavs, and he wasn't short of a bob or two.

Secondly, are chavs really a demonised and marginalised community? I would have thought the whole point of being a chav was that they are the ones doing the demonising and marginalising. I don't see blinged up louts as a vulnerable minority.

But more important than any of this, what is a "classist"? Look in the dictionary. There's no such word. And this girl's studying English.

❒❒❒

WE seem to have lost a lot of much-loved figures over the past year or two, but the death of Likely Lads star Rodney Bewes seems particularly sad.

In his later years he was a regular performer in this area, and he didn't bother with an agent or public relations officer. If he was in town he would telephone himself, and politely ask if we could give him a bit of publicity. He would then turn up in an old Ford Mondeo, with his scenery strapped to the roof rack or on a trailer.

He was saddened by his rift with co-star James Bolam, particularly the fact that Bolam distanced himself from The Likely Lads, seemingly believing it would harm his reputation as a serious actor.

Which is rather a shame. Because I can't help but think that 20, 30 or 40 years from now, The Likely Lads will be remembered much more fondly than New Tricks.

Soaring population: Time the Government got a grip

Jo Brand – reality telly at its most heart-tugging where stars are felines

Sajid Javid – claims that baby boomers are "living in a different world"

Biologist Sally Le Page – surprised at use of a divining rod to find a water main

No, baby boomers are not to blame

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

SO it's all our fault. Somehow I guessed that the housing shortage would eventually be blamed on us of the privileged, pampered post-war generation. Communities Secretary Sajid Javid says we baby boomers are "living in a different world" when we dare to question the need for millions more houses to be built. Really? Or maybe we live in the sort of world where, when a country's population has soared from 50 million to 70 million in a single lifetime and is growing at 500,000 a year, we expect the Government to get a grip. Most of Britain's social, housing and transport problems are the direct result of our soaring population - and yet the Government has no population policy. The problem is not selfish pensioners. It is stupid politicians.

DON'T believe anyone who claims to understand the Budget on Budget Day. All the little nasties are hidden away in something called the Red Book and will probably come to light a few days later, maybe at about the time you are reading this. It's that oh, **** moment.

IN this age of impersonal, soulless banking, I loved the tale from a reader whose little garage business was struggling some years ago. He went to his bank manager for a small loan and explained his cash-flow problem. The manager opened his drawer and tossed his car keys to him with the words: "I've got a new car on order. Sell this one for me and take a cut for yourself." No loan, no interest, no paperwork. Just fond memories of a simpler and more humane age.

TELLY has ticked all the schmaltz boxes and flicked all the weepy switches with Jo Brand's Cats & Kittens (C5). This is reality telly at its most heart-tugging where the stars are felines, the plot is all about horrible injuries and miraculous recoveries, and the presenter is that plump lass everybody loves. The icing on this extremely sugary cake is that it's set in Britain's most sentimental city, Liverpool. Having put all the aah-factor ingredients together so well, where does C5 go next? I had a brilliant idea about fluffy little orphaned baby hamsters being taught to sing Christmas carols by Aled Jones. What could possibly go wrong?

SALLY Le Page, described as "an evolutionary biologist at the University of Oxford and an award-winning science communicator and YouTuber," was surprised to hear that two Severn Trent workers were using a divining rod as they tried to find a water main near her parents' home. She has duly tweeted against this "mediaeval" practice and is "astonished" to discover that other water companies use the same techniques. Frankly, I'm astonished that she's astonished. Isn't it well known that water companies and many private citizens use divining? Over the years it has been reported in many TV and newspaper features. How can anyone become an evolutionary biologist at Oxford without knowing such things?

I HAVE a friend who is a dowser. I can't produce any scientifically acceptable proof that it works, but he makes a reasonable living at it, which suggests he has a fair success rate. I once had a go with his divining kit and, as a fully paid-up sceptic, was surprised at the "pull" on the L-shaped rods swivelling in biro tubes. It could have been self-delusion or I may have stumbled upon an underground stream, who knows? But if I were a Severn-Trent worker with a van stuffed full of hi-tech leak-detection devices which do not always work perfectly (because that's how real life goes), I might be tempted to carry divining rods, just as back-up. Where's the harm and what's the problem?

ONE Guardian website reader put it admirably: "When did science become so shrill and intolerant? " I bet the answer is when science took over from religion. They both have their inquisitions.

OUT of a chilly, windy day and into the warmth of the hairdresser's where the clippers (number three all over, since you ask) are soon humming merrily against my skull. I ask the hairdresser whether any customer has ever fallen asleep. 'Happens all the time,' she says. 'It's very therapeutic.' Offhand, I can't think of any other therapy that costs a fiver for ten minutes.

IT was the hairdresser who pointed out that, no matter how dark and gloomy the days are, the winter solstice is only four weeks away. One of the strange things about our calendar is how early midsummer and midwinter fall. Spring? It's just beyond that black cloud . . .

AND I have no idea what happened to September's confident predictions that Britain could suffer six named storms before Christmas. We have seen only two and one of those was a damp squib. Either we are in for a truly horrendous December or this is yet further proof that trying to forecast the weather more than a week ahead is a mug's game.

TALKING POINT

No one is immune to falling on hard times

FOOD banks are used by scroungers and asylum seekers and are magnets for those just looking for free food – according, sadly, to outspoken and somewhat deluded opponents of the facility.

And while many of us may shake our heads at such insensitive and ill-conceived ideas it is probably fair to say we don't really know who does use food banks, but don't think it's people like us.

What wishful thinking to believe it won't happen to us, that we are unlikely to have to turn to food banks for help. In truth it could happen to anyone – and for a number of reasons.

A study from researchers at Oxford University and King's College London, looking at those who use the Trussell Trust network of food banks – which has given out 586,907 three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis in first half of this year – found five out of six people were out of work and one in five had slept rough in recent months.

Ill health was common, while half of households using the food banks included someone with a disability and a third had mental health problems.

Eighty-seven per cent were born in the UK and four per cent had a degree – with the heavy debt of student loans hanging over their heads too. It's fair to say that the vast majority of those using food banks were on low incomes and more adversely affected by life changes.

However, any one of us could find ourselves out of work. Bad health is indiscriminate or we could suffer an injury and be left unable to work. What about those whose lives are turned upside down by divorce or family tragedy?

Latest figures are quite clear too that delays in making payments to people legitimately entitled to benefits under the controversial Universal Credit payments system have caused misery. Referrals to the trust in the first six months of the year were up by 13 per cent to 587,000 people, including 209,000 children.

One family from Hednesford recently donated £250 to the local food bank. Their reason? Both the mother, who was a nurse, and the father, a headteacher, had relied on such charity in the past.

No-one is immune to hard times and changing circumstances. Donate now to support those in need of a helping hand – just as you would hope the community would support you should the cruel finger of fate strike at any time.

● The Express & Star and Chronicle are running a Feed A Family This Christmas appeal in support of food banks and the homeless. Visit www.expressandstar.com/news/feed-a-family/

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Better transport is key to prosperity

AT last the Government has given the money for the extension of Midland Metro from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.

Hopefully this project can now move forward at a rapid pace, so that Dudley gets the improved public transport service to Birmingham the borough deserves.

But why do public transport projects in the West Midlands take eons to happen?

It is to the credit of Andy Street that movement is at last happening. However Greater Manchester have managed to build a network across their conurbation in the time it has taken the West Midlands to build one line and a short extension of it across Birmingham city centre.

There are proposals for other schemes throughout the West Midlands, for example further extensions of the Metro in the Black Country, the Camp Hill rail line and high quality bus corridors. If the West Midlands Combined Authority is serious about getting people out of their cars then high quality mass transit has to be provided.

The congestion across Birmingham and the Black Country is affecting the economy and public health through air pollution. We cannot waste time producing endless strategies and plans, which seems to be what has been done for 20 odd years with little to show.

It's clear what has to happen in order to get the West Midlands moving. The authorities must make it happen quickly so our region prospers and becomes a decent place to live.

KEVIN CHAPMAN
Chair, West Midlands Campaign for Better Transport

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle, Chronicle Editorial, 51-53 Queen Street Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Hospital parking problems

THE main road past Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley has double yellow lines on both sides, and white 'hash markings' down the centre. Despite these precautions, inconsiderate motorists park.

A few days ago, while travelling along this road on a bus, I counted 16 vehicles parked, and at least three parked the wrong way (facing on-coming traffic).

Do these people not even think of passengers in ambulances being taken for urgent treatment?

Yesterday, as we passed on a bus, there were only four cars, but there was a council van, presumably dishing out parking tickets; serves the blighters right.

They should be charged £200 each, then the cars crushed if they do not pay.

There should be more off road parking available for the hospital.

PETER COLE
Kingswinford

Get rid of the weeds

ISN'T it time Dudley Council found some money to empty the flower beds in Stourbridge of weeds.

Every week I hope someone will notice but the weeds keep growing, and growing. Surely we have employees working in the parks who could be given this task and at least make a difference.

A PEDMORE RESIDENT
(name supplied)

Games should benefit Dudley

THE prospect of the Commonwealth Games coming to Birmingham is great news but will the Black Country heartlands benefit from it?

Smethwick (not really part of the Black Country – sorry but it's true!) looks to be set for a multi-million pound investment in a purpose-built swimming centre. But it already has one, recently refurbished.

Sandwell has spent millions on its five leisure and swimming centres, does it need another one?

In contrast Dudley is the poorest borough for investment in public amenities with its three ageing leisure centres for nearly a third of a million people – about the same as Sandwell. Isn't it time that Dudley got a share of the spoils?

The long overdue investment to extend the Metro to Dudley is an ideal opportunity to link the town to a mainline railway station as its first priority, connecting it to the rest of the national rail network.

Dudley's Castle Gate has a wealth of hotels, entertainment and restaurants to offer visitors from the Commonwealth.

So I ask Dudley MBC, and everyone who believes in fairness, to stand up for the town of Dudley.

We have as much right to take advantage of the Games' opportunities as other places, and I would say a better case and more to offer than Smethwick – sorry but it's true!

A CROMPTON
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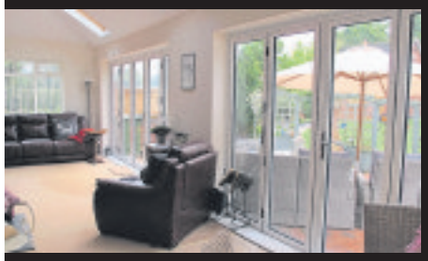

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Beer we go with an ironmaster memorial

Steve Field's Abraham Darby memorial design

A BREWERY is producing a special beer which will help fund a project to create a memorial to the pioneering ironmaster Abraham Darby I at his birthplace in Dudley

Ten per cent of the sales of bottles of 'Abraham Darby 1st' produced by Holden's Brewery will be going to the fund.

The beer from the Woodsetton-based brewery in Dudley is being launched shortly before Christmas and the label, designed by artist Steve Field, depicts the proposed design for the memorial monument.

Mandy Caddick, a local resident who came up with the memorial idea, said: "We are hopeful that the memorial will be in place in Woodsetton at the end of 2018 or early 2019 for the 310th anniversary of the opening of Abraham's first furnace in Coalbrookdale, where in 1709 he smelted iron from coke, rather than charcoal. This was to revolutionise iron production and sparked the Industrial Revolution.

Robber is grabbed by passers-by

A BASEBALL-BAT wielding shop robber stopped in his tracks by have-a-go heroes has been put behind bars for five years.

Masked raider Stephen Ball burst into the Spar shop in Gornal Wood with an accomplice clutching a machete and warned the female assistant: 'If you don't do what I tell you I will hurt you,' a judge was told.

She and a colleague were bundled into an office at the Abbey Road shop by the other robber who ordered them to open the safe while the defendant filled a bin bag with goods and cash.

The accomplice piled money from the safe into a bin which he left in the shop after being 'spooked' when passers-by gathered outside in a bid to foil the October 23 raid, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Report by John Scott

He fled to a getaway car which sped off while Ball, from Tipton, was still loading a haul of cigarettes, tobacco and almost £150 cash, said Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting.

Smashed

People then tried to prevent Ball's escape but were showered with glass as the 31-year-old father of four smashed his way through the blocked front door, only to discover that the other crooks had left without him.

The desperate robber then smashed the driver's window of a car outside but failed to grab the key from the ignition before the woman motorist drove off. He was then grabbed by three men who held him until police arrived.

The defendant, a drug addict with 32 previous convictions, who was on licence after being released early from a jail term imposed for a similar robbery, needed money to buy Christmas presents for his children, said his lawyer Mr Philip Brunt. Ball, of Turner Street, admitted robbery, criminal damage, assault, affray and possession of an offensive weapon.

The three who detained the robber are each to receive £100.

Other members of the robbery gang are still at large.

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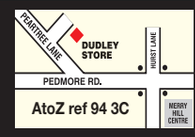

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Fund-razor brings in cash for cancer charity

A TRIO braving the shave for a cancer charity have seen their amount doubled by a generous business.

Tara Delahay, from Dudley, managed to raise more than £2,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support along with partner Lee Robinson, aged 48, and her father Keith Delahay, 64, after Tara's mother Chris was diagnosed with cancer.

But the figure raised was doubled when Lloyds British Speedy in Wednesbury stepped in to help take the total to more than £5,000.

Miss Delahay said: "It was back in July that mom got diagnosed with high grade non-Hodgkin lymphoma, it's a blood cancer. "At that point we went to the hospital and got the diagnosis, which was a complete shock.

"When mom was told she was going to lose her hair that's when she broke down.

"Initially I hadn't heard of brave the shave, I just did it to support my mom. My other half Lee and my dad said we would all do it together.

"It was fantastic, it's just been totally overwhelming the amount of support from friends and family.

"The hair that I have had cut off I'm donating to the Little Princess Trust. They will use my hair to make wigs for children."

A total of £2,733.34 was raised, which beat a £1,650 target, but the trio also received support from Juniper Training, where Tracy and Lee are based, then lifting, testing and training business Lloyds British Speedy made their very generous collection.

In a bid to further support her mother, 38-year-old Tara has pledged to keep her hair short until her mother has finished her treatment.

She said: "I've actually shaved it again since. I'm keeping it like this until mom has finished all her treatment.

"She's done ok, she's been really positive and really strong."

Tara Delahay, of Dudley, who braved the Shave, with (left) Lee Robinson, and her father Keith Delahay

Teenagers facing weapon charges after police incident

A 19-year-old and 17-year-old have been charged by police after an officer was allegedly threatened with a gun.

The officer was confronted in Park Street, Stourbridge, after being called to reports of a burglary. Minutes later the police officer Tasered a man following a pursuit. A senior officer later praised the female officer's 'outstanding courage'.

Reece Lones, aged 19, of no fixed address, was charged with criminal damage to property and possession of a firearm. He appeared at Birmingham Magistrates Court last week and was remanded to appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on December 18.

Knife

A 17-year-old boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was charged with possession of a knife and cannabis and will appear at Wolverhampton Youth Court in December.

The incident on Saturday, November 18, also saw a 17-year-old girl arrested but later released with no further action and a 21-year-old man received a reprimand.

Anyone with further information is asked to call the police on 101.

34,000 tons of road salt ready for the winter

THOUSANDS of tons of salt have been prepared ready to keep the region's motorways and major roads running smoothly this winter.

Highways England is responsible for looking after 1,000 miles of motorway and trunk road in the West Midlands.

The Government-owned company said it has prepared a total of 34,000 tons of salt, being stored in 12 depots. It has more than 200 staff, a fleet of 61 gritters and three snow blowers dedicated to the region.

Roads minister Jesse Norman said: "It is essential to keep our road network running throughout the winter.

"Highways England has informed us that they are well prepared for adverse weather, with enough salt to cover 610,000 miles of our motorways.

Trained

"But the expert advice is clear – drivers need to make their own judgments about road conditions. If it doesn't look safe then they should stay put and travel once weather conditions have improved."

Across the country, Highways England has 1,300 specially-trained gritter drivers, more than 280,000 tons of salt and more than 500 salt spreading vehicles ready around the clock. It also has more than 250 environmental sensor stations that provide real-time monitoring of road weather conditions and temperatures.

Report by Robert Cox

Highways England is urging drivers not to use the hard shoulder to undertake gritters, risking a collision with a stationary vehicle and causing a hazard when gritters try to come off at junctions.

National winter and severe weather team leader Paul Furlong said: "We care about people getting to their destinations safely, and during any severe weather our teams will be working around the clock to keep traffic moving.

"We're asking drivers to make sure they and their vehicles are also prepared. Before you set out, check your vehicle, the road conditions and the weather forecast.

"If conditions are poor, and journeys are not essential, consider waiting until the weather gets better – this should improve journeys, and give our gritters a chance to treat the roads.''

Drivers are also encouraged to make sure they have a winter kit in their vehicle, including an ice scraper, deicer, warm clothes and sunglasses to cope with the low winter sun.

Homeserve in £54m deal

HOMESERVE has completed its takeover of Checkatrade in a £54 million deal as it announced fresh growth at home and abroad. The Walsall-based home repairs, insurance and improvements business said revenue in the first six months of the year rose 16 per cent to £366m.

The company, which employs around 1,100 at its Green Lane headquarters, bought the remaining 60 per cent of trades website Checkatrade it did not already own.

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A Likely Lad's fame was tinged with sadness

AT the height of his fame, Rodney Bewes partied with Mick Jagger, stayed in Paris with Omar Sharif, and drove around swinging London in a white Porsche.

Yet the actor who died last week aged 79 often gave the impression that he was more content rocking up at Stourbridge Town Hall in an old Mondeo, with his devoted wife Daphne helping him carry his equipment.

Back in the1960s and 70s, Bewes and James Bolam were the rock-stars of television comedy. Their appearances in Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais's The Likely Lads, and its sequel Whatever Happened To The Likely Lads? were watched every week by 27 million viewers.

However, while for Bewes the hit sitcom about two young lads growing up in the north-east of England was the pinnacle of his career, for Bolam it was the stepping stone to a career as a serious actor.

Rodney Bewes on stage at Stourbridge Town Hall

Bewes, right, with co-stars Wendy Richard, James Bolam and Wanda Ventham

Drama

While Bewes was happy to bask in the reflected popularity of his character Bob Ferris for years to come, Bolam was keen to forget about his years as cynical Terry Collier, moving on to gritty drama When The Boat Comes In, and later The Beiderbecke Affair and New Tricks.

When asked if he thought he would be best remembered for his role in The Likely Lads, Bewes said: "Actually it is the only thing I am remembered for. But at least I'm remembered for something."

In his later years, he did several tours based around the life and works of Walsall-born author Jerome K Jerome, and spoke about his fondness for Stourbridge Town Hall in particular.

"It's a little gem hidden in a traffic island," he once said, referring to the town's infamous ring road. "You go round and round in circles looking for it, and then inside this great big traffic island you find this gem of a little Victorian theatre, it's a lovely setting and they are lovely people."

Bewes was happy with a simpler life, although he was upset by Bolam's refusal to allow The Likely Lads to be repeated on mainstream TV, depriving him of an income in his later years. He joked that his wife – who died two years ago after a stroke – had changed her name to 'Poor Daphne' because she was always clearing up while he was reminiscing about the show.

Well into his 70s, he was still paying his mortgage and overdraft, and remarked that he was often amused by the reaction of other people when they saw him travelling by bus. Right up until the end, he was troubled by his rift with Bolam, who had refused to speak to him since he made an ill-judged joke in 1976 about his co-star becoming a father.

Bewes tried to bury the hatchet with his old friend, but said that all attempts were rebuffed.

He also said tht he would have loved to have brought The Likely Lads back for a third outing, along the lines of two elderly friends – but Bolam would have none of if. Bolam, aged 82, says there was no feud and they had simply lost touch.

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Blundering burglar chose the wrong shop to raid

A BURGLAR blundered when he raided a shop, not knowing it was run by a man he had robbed several years earlier.

Craig Poole and another man broke into LD Communications in Quarry Bank High Street during the early hours of June 4, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The pair caused more than £1,000 damage pushing a panel out of a door before climbing through the hole into the premises, said Mr Geoffrey Dann, prosecuting. They ransacked a mobile phone display and escaped with around £500 worth of phone covers.

Owner Luke Dyas was astonished when he checked CCTV camera footage of the break-in and recognised one of the burglars as the man who had robbed him almost seven years earlier.

The 31-year-old criminal was put on a wanted list but was not caught until he struck again, this time breaking into Heatflow Contracts n Pedmore Road, Brierley Hill, on July 16.

He smashed a window to gain access and escaped with a large haul including tools, a compressor and sets of keys for two vehicles parked outside. Poole drove off in one and soon returned for the other but was traced through their tracker devices.

He had 35 previous convictions for 69 offences, most serious of which had been the robbery of Mr Dyas, for which he was jailed for 30 months in 2011.

Mr Simon Hanns, defending, said Poole had been devastated by the murder of his cousin Ryan Passey in Stourbridge. He added that crimes were committed to fund a heroin habit.

Poole, of Lodge Crescent, Netherton, pleaded guilty to the two burglaries and given a 14-month jail term suspended for 18 months with 80 hours' unpaid work and two-month curfew.

Superfast broadband at new homes

MORE than 100 homes in the Black Country will see their broadband speeds soar, according to a developer.

Around 150 properties at Redrow's development in Throne Road, Rowley Regis, will be gaining access to superfast broadband with speeds up to 80Mbps – more than double the UK average – where previously their typical speeds were less than 2Mbps.

Openreach will be investing alongside Redrow Homes for around 3,000 premises on housing developments, bringing fibre broadband to the first tranche of residents by October next year.

Redrow Homes chief executive John Tutte said: "We saw the potential of a national co-funding agreement with Openreach for homes we'd previously built that had lower than average broadband speeds."

Views from the past for new year calendar

Grandmother Jan Herp with her calendar recalling views from a Black Country town's past

A RETIRED teaching assistant has turned her hand to art with a calendar of drawings showcasing how a Black Country town once looked.

Jan Herp, aged 61, from Netherton, has pencilled 12 scenes showing Wednesbury scenes in the 20th century and compiled them in a calendar for 2018. Grandmother Jan grew up in Wednesbury.

She has sold several of her calendars to Black Country expatriates in America, Germany and Spain.

She also hopes that her pictures may inspire memories for elderly people with dementia as well as nostalgia for the Wednesbury of yesteryear. She said: "I would like to thank all the folk who have supported me, an ode Wednesbury wench, with my artwork and placed an order for a unique calendar."

Find out more at Jan H Art on Facebook.

More activities for disabled youngsters

A CHARITY which runs activity sessions for the disabled has launched a group for children in Dudley after receiving a four-figure grant.

Dudley Inclusive Activities won £1,061 from Heart of England Community Foundation to launch a group for young people unable to take part in its regular activities.

Sessions held every fortnight at Stourbridge Leisure Centre welcome children who struggle to take part in larger group events, and their families, to enjoy games, soft play and art.

The foundation, a grant-making charity that is the only one of its kind in the region, has distributed more than £122,000 to projects across the Black Country since April.

Greg Southall, of Dudley Inclusive Activities, said: "We hold a variety of activity sessions, but these are not always suitable for some children and teenagers.

"Our new group is aimed at those who are unable to take part in our regular provisions – many of which are severely autistic and have very limited communication – and enables them to take part in smaller activity sessions with their families. The new group is already proving to be incredible popular and we are already looking into the possibility of running this weekly rather than fortnightly."

Rattlesnakes are ready to rock Brum

HIGHLY-RATED live band Frank Carter and the Rattlesnakes, who last week released new single Spray Paint Love, are in concert at Birmingham's O2 Institute on Saturday night.

The rock band's second album, Modern Ruin, was a top ten success.

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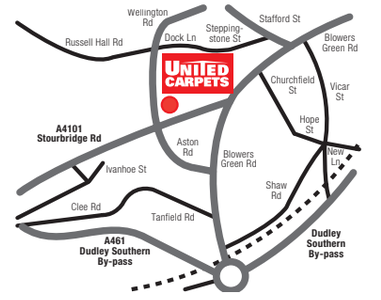

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Masters of trades are an inspiration to all

Sculptor Luke Perry, of Wordsley, was among the masters of crafts celebrated at Saturday's event

A WEALTH of talent in the form of award-winning authors, designers, green-fingered gardeners and inspiring athletes was put on display at a unique event.

The Black Country's best were celebrated at the 100 Masters one-day pop-up festival in the heart of Wolverhampton on Saturday.

Stars such as Sathnam Sanghera, Ellie Simmonds, Hugh Porter and The Fizzogs were among the list of those honoured at the event.

Taking place at Starworks Warehouse, in Frederick Street, the day offered visitors a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the work of 100 different Black Country creators.

Kerry O'Coy, who was behind the Creative Black Country initiative, said: "The campaign started around 18 months ago and we started to ask for names of people brilliant in what they do. We had hundreds of nominations and then commissioned artists to represent them in a variety of different ways. It is incredibly diverse.

"The masters range from those internationally recognised to those who are little-known, such as a shop owner from Wolverhampton."

Wolverhampton author Sathnam spoke about the BBC adaptation of his book The Boy With The Top Knot and growing up in the city, while music came courtesy of Conrad Gail's choir.

Hugh Porter, who was recognised as one of the nine sporting masters, said: "As a proud Black Country boy this is a fantastic honour."

Eighty-year-old printer John Neave displayed a selection of his original works and spoke about how technology has still not put him out of business.

One of the masters in gardening, 'Cactus' Stan Griffin, from West Bromwich, displayed some of his greatest home-grown cacti. The shortlisted Masters were chosen via a panel selection process and came from a dazzling breadth of backgrounds, ages and areas of the region. For details, please go to the website 100masters.co.uk

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Pleased to help – oh yes we are!

Supporters – Jack and the Beanstalk panto stars Adam C Booth and Ian Adams visit the newspaper offices

A HOST of stars have come out in support of our Feed A Family This Christmas food banks appeal with readers rallying to help the cause.

Superstar boy band The Vamps were among the big names to back the appeal and urge readers and communities to donate items.

Singer James McVey, who was at the Merry Hill centre for the Christmas lights switch-on, said: "It is a great idea and a good cause."

And panto stars Ian Adams and Adam C Booth stopped off at the Express & Star and Chronicle offices in Wolverhampton before switching on the city's Christmas lights to offer their support to the campaign.

Ian, who plays Dame Trott and Adam who is Simple Simon in Jack and the Beanstalk at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre, also appealed for more donations. Their fellow panto star Lisa Riley helped launch the appeal and support has also come from such names as Slade legend Dave Hill, auctioneer Will Farmer and Olympian Joe Clarke. Meanwhile a kind-hearted Cannock market trader has offered to collect food and other items.

Anne Franks sells a variety of goods for a different charity each week on her pop-up stall at Cannock Indoor Market and has offered to use the stall to collect for Feed a Family.

The stall is adjacent to the Market Cafe. Items can be donated every Friday and Saturday until the end of the campaign on December 16.

The campaign aims to help the homeless, those who need the support of food banks and women helped by The Haven refuge in Wolverhampton.

The non-perishable food will be handed to food banks and other charitable organisations across the Black Country and Staffordshire. Readers can donate festive food, and basics including canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, rice and non-food items, toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents are also welcome.

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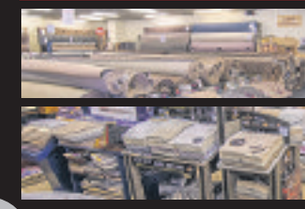

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Meetings to be held at new venue

Grange (E) Guild

CHAIRMAN Chris Holton presided over the Grange (E) November meeting – held for the final time at Grange Court, Stourbridge.

She welcomed 28 members and one guest. Minutes from the previous meeting were read, approved and signed as a true record.

Chris announced that meetings would no longer be held at Grange Court, but would move St Peter's Centre in Pedmore Lane, Pedmore. The Christmas party will be at this new venue on December 5. There is no meeting in January but from February they will be held every second Tuesday.

West Midlands Federation is holding a Christmas celebration at St Thomas' Church, Market Street, Stourbridge on December 9, from 2.15pm. Tea and mince pies will be served in the church hall afterwards.

The speaker for the evening gave a very interesting talk with slides entitled 'Nature in Focus' which covered all aspects of the nature around Wyre Forest along with some coastal areas. Members enjoyed every minute of the talk. The vote of thanks was given to Rosemary on members' behalf by the chairman.

Refreshments were served by hostesses Margaret Blower and Joan Biddlestone and their helpers.

The raffle was then drawn with three lucky winners. The sales table had a Christmas theme with everything being sold.

Councillors stand in as MP called away

Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, Luncheon Club committee member Pauline Berrington, chairman Ann Rogers, and Councillor Steve Clark

AT the November meeting chairman Ann Rogers was delighted to welcome a record number of members and three visitors, namely Margaret Adams and Councillors Karen Shakespeare and Steve Clark, who came along to speak to members in the absence of MP Mike Wood who had had to leave for London to address a Sepsis Conference.

Following an excellent three-course lunch Councillor Clark spoke about his family and career before becoming a councillor and the challenges he faces managing a budget of £750 million. He explained some of the future proposals of the council, including building a new leisure centre in Dudley and refurbishing others. Both he and Councillor Shakespeare were keen to bring improvements to Dudley and answered lots of questions from members ensuring a lively end to the meeting.

The Christmas meal is on December 8 with entertainment by the St Andrews Singers and 2018 will start on January 12 with Derek Coates on Walking in Wensleydale followed by Terry Church on Village Memories on February 9.

Sensory bands aid patients

Sedgley Morning TG

THE Sedgley Morning TG are supporting Alzheimer's Society as their charity of the year, and members have been knitting sensory bands.

The bands are sleeves that have attachments added to them, and they are used to calm patients with dementia or Alzheimer's by giving them something to do with their hands. The bands will be part of a presentation to the society at a guild meeting in February.

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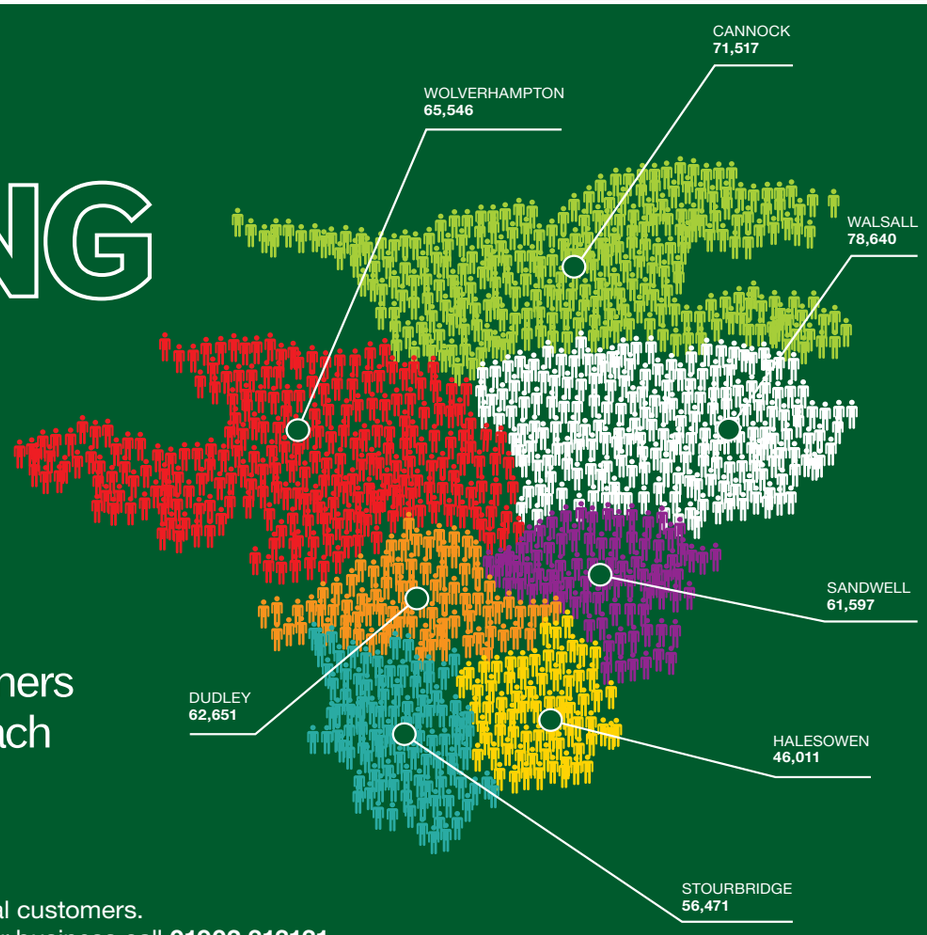

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Gordon – crowned world's top impersonator of the King

Gordon Hendricks in Bridgnorth in 2014

Fans all shook up by Elvis tribute

WITH a swing of the hips and a flick of his quiff, Gordon Hendricks looks every bit Elvis re-incarnated as he saunters onto the stage.

Recently crowned the world's top impersonator of the King, you'd expect him to be a dab hand at getting the audience all shook up, and Hendricks does not disappoint.

At the start of December, he will be at Bridgnorth's Theatre on the Steps for not just one, but three nights – all of which have been sold out for months. And it's not the first time he's appeared at the Stoneway Steps venue after performing the King's classics on a number of occasions in the past.

Few of his fans would have been aware that Hendricks' path to stardom was partly forged just down the road in Wolverhampton, where he appeared at the city's Grand Theatre recently.

Ian Reddihough, artistic director of the Bridgnorth theatre, which regularly hosts tribute acts to some of music's most biggest icons, said: "He's just come back from Ultimate Elvis where he won the world's best Elvis award. He's one of, if not the best in the world.

"Gordon has been appearing at the theatre for years and won Stars In Their Eyes in 2005. Every year he plays at the Theatre on the Steps he's sold out six months in advance.

"He's a very good impersonator and well-loved by a lot of people. He regards the Theatre on the Steps as his home. We put the tickets on sale and within two weeks they had all sold out. That's 540 tickets in total."

Hendricks' manager is Alan Clayton, of Shropshire, and was once part of a so-called 'Golden Age' of music in Wolverhampton

He used to be a director of entertainment agency Astra International and ran the city's infamous Club Lafayette, which hosted top acts including the Sex Pistols before closing its doors in the early 1980s. Along with his fellow agency directors, Alan managed the likes of the Montanas, Light Fantastic, the Californians and pre-Slade band the N'Betweense.

OMG OMD still sound fresh after 39 years

OMD, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

IT'S a testament to the musicianship and longevity of synth pop outfit OMD that whilst most of their '80s contemporaries live on past glories, songs from 13th album are greeted by their fans with as much enthusiasm as those from their 39-year-old debut.

Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, like their stadium-filling peers Depeche Mode, have avoided the nostalgia circuit.

The quartet based on the partnership of Andy McCluskey and Paul Humphreys opened with Ghost Star from new album The Punishment Of Luxury, followed by the pulsating Isotype. But they didn't neglect their hit-studded past.

Fans at a full-house Symphony Hall were treated to Messages, Tesla Girls, Enola Gay, Joan of Arc, Maid of Orleans, So In Love, Locomotion, Sailing On The Seven Seas and, for final encore, Electricity. And McCluskey still has those manic dance moves.

Following a fans' vote, they performed the rarely heard Radio Waves from the Dazzle Ships album.

The unassuming Humphries took over vocal duties on the gorgeous Forever Live And Die, Souvenir and new song What Have We Done, the latter proving they can write them like they used to.

LEON BURAKOWSKI

The audience follow heroine Clara's journey to a fantasy land of toy soldiers

Show cracks it as perfect festive curtain-raiser

REVIEWS

The Nutcracker, Birmingham Hippodrome

WHAT a Christmas cracker! Birmingham Royal Ballet's production of The Nutcracker is an unbeatable way to start the festive season. It has been delighting families at the theatre for more than 25 years and it hasn't lost an ounce of its magical charm and fabulous feel-good factor.

Full of sparkle it serves a feast for the senses with opulent costumes, lavish sets and Tchaikovsky's superb score perfectly performed by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia.

There was an air of excitement for the opening night with many budding ballerinas in the audience dressed in their pretty party dresses. And they weren't disappointed as they followed the heroine Clara's journey to a fantasy land of toy soldiers, giant rats and snow fairies after she was transported there following a magician's visit on Christmas Eve.

It's a fast-moving spectacle with plenty of contrasting sets to showcase the dancers impressive range of athletic talent and artistic style. From the energetic to the elegant, the classic to the comic, the mood changes from scene to scene keeping the audience enthralled. All eyes are on the dancers but the crew behind the scenes conjure up stunning special effects including the Christmas tree and fireplace transformation, the snow scene and Clara's flight through the clouds.

Special praise for Celine Gittens' elegant and poised Rose Fairy while Momoko Hirata as the Sugar Plum Fairy and Cesar Morales as the Prince danced their duets with precision and flair.

The Nutcracker runs at the Hippodrome until December 13.

MARIA CUSINE

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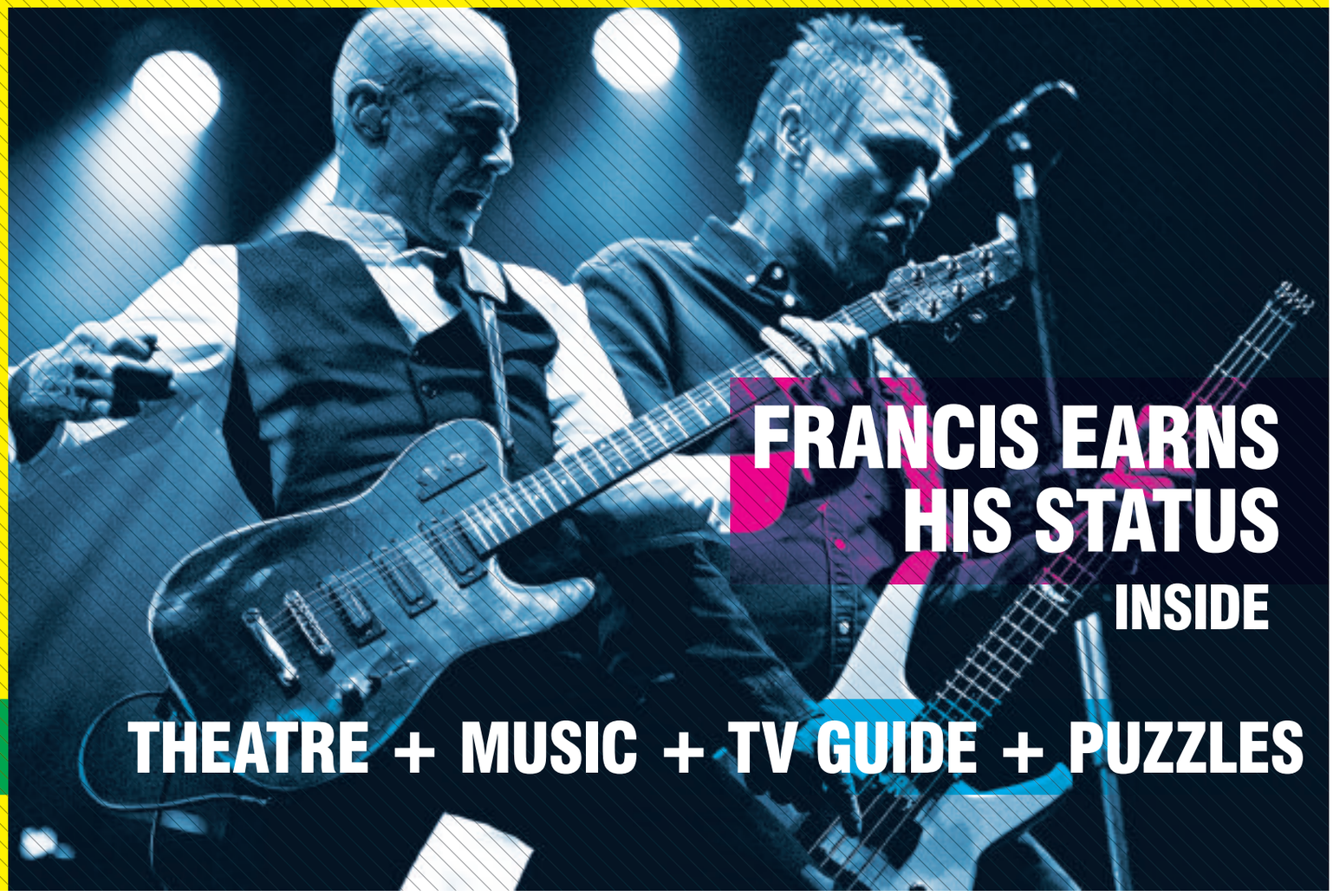

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Francis: It's not the same without Rick

There's only one place to start: the death of his bandmate of 50 years, Rick Parfitt. Francis doesn't mind. He knows he's got to talk about it, that Status Quo will forever be him and Rick, that their stories and history are forever linked.

And though he's chipper about being back on the road with Quo – they play Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on Sunday – he's dutiful and respectful on the subject of his late, great bandmate.

"It's been a challenging time and it's been confusing."

Rick's place has been taken by Richie Malone, the band's new touring guitarist. He's had a profound effect.

Francis says: "If you'd have said to me this young fella will make a lot of difference to the way the band feels and plays, I'd have said don't talk rubbish. People said it was all over and we weren't doing any more show. But things change. I didn't expect it to happen. We're enjoying the shows immensely. We've just got back from Australia and Dubai and apart from the jet lag that's been great.

"I'm looking forward to it all. I really did not expect to be in this position or feeling this way."

He realises he'll get stick from diehard Quo fans, that they'll resent him for moving on and not forever wearing black.

"I understand if people are thinking I'm a schmuck. But I don't want to apologise about feeling good about the band. I don't know why it's so good: maybe it's because there's something to prove. It's not the same as it was with Rick, it's just different. There's a certain vibe within the band.

"Maybe we'd become complacent. Rick's health issues were going on for a few years and that made things difficult. Perhaps that happens to all older bands."

He's conscious of growing older, of entering the autumn of his career. But he's proud to be on the road at the age of 68. He's still got the moves, still got the voice and still loves playing the songs that have stood the test of time.

"It all moves on. The Stones were once the most rebellious band in the world and now they're 75. They've survived.

"I'm sixty-bl***y-eight. But something else is going on. You can tell I'm chipper. My manager is in the desert somewhere. But when I speak with him I'm la la la.

"We're not sure what's next. We may do another rock album, which I said I would never do. This business is great at making you go the other way. You say you're not going to do this and that. As we get older, we're worried about dribbling, but we go back to being the young person we were. That insecure little show-off in me is trying to prove something.

"I look forward to the gigs much more. That makes me question was I not looking forward to them before. It's not the same without Rick. It can't be."

His memories of Rick's passing are vivid. "It started in Turkey. As much as he died on Christmas Eve, really, he died in front of us in Turkey. He was on the floor and the medics told me he'd gone. I uncrossed his feet, they were crossed over. I watched what those people were doing to him. Our relationship was well documented. It was frosty sometimes but generally it was quite good. The PA who was with him saved him in Turkey.

"It was really quite horrible what the medical profession did to bring him round. He left the room dead but by the time we were back in London, he was sitting up and having a cup of tea. But then it was clear there was something that was wrong. That was when I thought 'Oh no'. So we got the new boy in. Rick said: 'If I kick the bucket, get him in'. We laughed about it, that was the relationship we had."

Still rocking – Francis says performing is not the same without Rick

The relationship between Francis and Richie took a while to develop. At first, Francis was frosty with the incoming, looking at him as though to ask what he was doing standing in his partner's place? But the ice slowly melted and the band moved on.

"It happens. We die and everything carries on. I've lost two aunts and an uncle recently. As soon as I come out the funeral, I go to the studio and carry on. But the thought was difficult, carrying on. As I said, something happened. Some people think we shouldn't carry on, but we had to."

He is amused at the man that he's become. Once a hellraiser and firmly anti-establishment, these days he sports an OBE and spends time in the garden. "Getting the OBE was a huge honour. If I'm really honest, I don't feel people like us deserve it. I think the midwife in Leeds does but not us. But we maintain the profile of the honours system. No one really is going to ask the nurse or the milkman what they think – they don't get the media attention. The fact that Rick and I and various others in our business get them helps to raise the profile of the honours system."

> *My best friends in showbiz are people like Roy Wood and Jeff Lynne*

He's unsure what the future holds. There may be more records and more tours, though they may take time out in 2018 to reassess and consider where they're going. If they do tour again, the Black Country and Birmingham will be high on their list of places to visit.

"I've said this before but my best friends in showbusiness are people like Roy Wood, Jeff Lynne, Robert Plant and a truck driver whose name I'm not going to tell you – and they're all from your neck of the woods. Everybody I know from the area is fabulous, genuine. There's also a couple of rasta guys who do the NEC. I see them occasionally, any of those people I meet, it's like it was only yesterday that we saw each other. I might not see them for years, but I consider them friends. I feel comfortable around your lot."

● **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

Steps – new music after 17 years

Steps into the future with new album and party tour

It's been 20 years since Steps released their disco-tastic debut – and now they're back to celebrate with a big pop party at Arena Birmingham tomorrow (Friday).

Lisa Scott-Lee and Claire Richards are trying to work out who the Chancellor of the Exchequer was when they formed, 20 years ago, in 1997. A giggling Ian 'H' Watkins, sat behind them, tickles them. Swatting him away, Claire correctly answers 'Gordon Brown' to the delight of her bandmates, who fall about laughing at H's antics.

It's just one sign of the affinity retained by the group, who split acrimoniously at the turn of the millennium, when Claire and H wanted to form a duo. Since then things have been patched up, and the band reformed in 2011 for a Sky Living series and a string of concerts.

Now, more than five years on, with the exception of 39-year-old Claire, they have all celebrated their 40th birthdays, but that does little to deter their energy.

The five, completed by Lee Latchford-Evans and Faye Tozer, are delighted at the success of their first album proper in 17 years, Tears On The Dancefloor, and single Scared Of The Dark. They listened to that song's first play on the radio together – almost 20 years to the day after they gathered to hear their debut, 5, 6, 7, 8.

"It felt like we had started all over again," reflects H. "New music the key for us to have a new energy with Steps," says Faye, "because we couldn't have asked the fans to come and see us again with just the old songs. I think it has breathed new life into us."

The Party On The Dancefloor tour also goes to the Genting Arena on December 9.

Strictly star Joanne is back in a flash

Flashdance The Musical returns to the UK for the first time since 2011, starring Strictly Come Dancing favourite Joanne Clifton and pop star Ben Adams, at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, December 9.

Strictly champion Joanne won both the main Strictly glitter ball, with Ore Oduba last year, and the Christmas Special in 2015 with Harry Judd.

Joanne made her musical theatre debut in Irving Berlin musical Face The Music, for which she was nominated for an award. She followed this up as Marilyn Monroe in the Norma Jeane The Musical and then trod the boards as Millie Dillmount in the UK Tour of Thoroughly Modern Millie.

Of her role as Alex Owens in the UK Tour of Flashdance, Joanne said: "This is just another dream come true. I think everyone in the world, whether dancer or non-dancer, as soon as they hear What a Feeling, remember that iconic scene at the end of the film and I'm so incredibly lucky that I get to do that every night in a UK tour. I can once again sing and act alongside dancing."

Ben who will join Joanne on stage as Nick Hurley, at 16 became the lead singer of the band a1, who racked up 10 million record sales, including two UK number ones. He is now a successful songwriter, producer and actor. He also reached the final of Celebrity Big Brother.

Of taking to the stage in Flashdance, he says: "It's amazing to be part of such an iconic story, and as an 80's child I was brought up on this music."

Flashdance The Musical is based on the hit movie and tells the story of Alex, a welder by day and 'flashdancer' by night, who will not give up on her dream of becoming a professional dancer.

Prankster Lee is a Serious Joker

The Prime Minister's least favourite comedian is at Dudley Town Hall tomorrow night (Friday). Prankster Lee Nelson caused a sensation at the Conservative Party Conference when he approached Theresa May during her speech and handed her a mock P45, claiming it was on behalf of Boris Johnson. Lee Nelson, real name Simon Brodkin, brings his Serious Joker tour to the Black Country, with his new suited and booted look after ditching the baseball cap and sportswear.

JAWS are ready to bite your Brum again

They impressed with their set at the Beyond The Tracks Festival earlier this year, and now Birmingham dream pop trio JAWS are giving home town fans another chance to see them live.

The former Halesowen College students are closing their tour with a set of swirling guitar rock at Digbeth's O2 Institute tomorrow (Friday), with Leeds indie outfit Marsicans and London band Social Contract.

JAWS are Connor Schofield on vocals and guitar, Alex Hudson on guitars and Eddy Geach on drums. A year ago they released their second album Simplicity, the follow up to 2014 debut Be Slowly.

Also tomorrow, The Charlatans are at Wolverhampton Civic Hall while Good Charlotte play the O2 Academy. Then the Academy hosts Scouting For Girls on Saturday, with Gorillaz at the Birmingham Arena.

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Dudley Chronicle Thursday, November 30, 2017

SATURDAY'S TV DECEMBER 2

CHOICE

Simon Cowell

The X Factor: Live Final (ITV, 7.05pm)

Once upon a time, the winner of The X Factor was almost guaranteed a Christmas No.1 single. Those days are now gone, but that's not to say there isn't a lot riding on this weekend's final of the singing contest. After weeks of lively auditions, gruelling boot camps, six-chair challenges and tense on-stage showdowns, the winner will be announced tomorrow. But before that, the three remaining wannabes take to the stage again here, with judges Simon Cowell, Louis Walsh, Nicole Scherzinger and Sharon Osbourne delivering their verdict. The act with the lowest public-vote figures then faces the heart-breaking prospect of finishing in third place, while the remaining two go on to battle it out.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nigella: At My Table. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Live Snooker: UK Championship. Coverage of the fourth day at the Barbican Centre in York. **2.00** Live International Rugby Union. Wales v South Africa (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30** Final Score. **5.25** Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme. **5.55** BBC News.

6.05 Regional Programme.

6.15 Pointless Celebrities. Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Brendan Cole, Chris Hollins, Russell Grant, Aliona Vilani, Jay McGuiness, Anton du Beke and Erin Boag compete in a "Strictly Come Dancing" edition of the quiz. (R)

7.05 Strictly Come Dancing. Only six couples remain in the running, as Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman invite the pro-celebrity duos back to the studio for another round of performances. This time, it is Musicals Week, which means the stars and their professional dancer partners will be tackling popular routines from West End and Broadway shows. The show begins with a group performance taking the form of a routine from the soundtrack of Oliver!, before their stars are tasked with pulling off their individual dances. Judges Shirley Ballas, Darcey Bussell, Bruno Tonioli and Craig Revel Horwood are on hand to deliver their verdicts and award points to the most successful stars. However, the competitors' true fate will only be decided once the public has voted.

8.10 Michael McIntyre's Big Show. Jessie J and Stereophonics perform on-stage at London's Theatre Royal, and football pundit Alan Shearer hands over his phone for Celebrity Send to All.

9.10 Casualty. Connie puts her health at risk by maintaining a presence on the ED, Ethan shows up late for his practical consultancy exam, and Max takes a shine to new coffee shop worker Polly.

10.00 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.20 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents action from the latest Premier League matches.

11.50 The NFL Show.

12.20 Film: Lay the Favorite. (2012) **1.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **7.00** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **7.30** Deadly 60. (R) **8.00** Show Me What You're Made Of: UK. **8.30** Live Rugby League World Cup. **11.30** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) **12.30** Operation Snow Tiger. (R) **1.30** Mastermind. (R) **2.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship.

6.00 Rugby League World Cup. Tanya Arnold introduces highlights of the final at Brisbane Stadium, where the successors to Australia were decided after 28 matches spanning the last five weeks.

7.00 Front Row. Brenda Emmanus and a selection of critics and artists discuss the state of contemporary art in Britain, as part of a special edition focusing on this year's Turner Prize shortlist.

7.30 Galapagos – Islands of Change: Natural World. David Attenborough narrates a documentary that looks at the impact increased migration and tourism has had on the Pacific archipelago's wildlife. (R)

8.30 Dad's Army. Captain Mainwaring lets Frazer take charge of the platoon, gambling that a taste of authority will give him a more responsible attitude. (R)

9.00 Imagine – Rachel Whiteread: Ghost in the Room. A profile of Rachel Whiteread, from the controversy surrounding her 1993 Turner Prize-winning piece House, to the acclaim she achieved for creating Vienna's Holocaust Memorial.

10.05 QI XL. Romesh Ranganathan, Matt Lucas and Liza Tarbuck join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig for an extended edition of the quiz show.

10.50 Insert Name Here. Hugh Dennis, Suzannah Lipscomb, Rebecca Front and Phil Wang join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name. (R)

11.20 Snooker: UK Championship. The second round at the Barbican Centre in York, where the matches were played over the best of 11 frames, in the prestigious ranking tournament. Hazel Irvine presents.

12.10 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. **2.10 Film:** Ratcatcher. (1999) **3.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.25** Gino's Italian Coastal Escape. (R) **11.55** ITV News; Weather. **12.00** The X Factor: The Semi Finals. (R) **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Newbury. Coverage of the second day of the winter carnival at Newbury. **4.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **4.25** The Cruise: Sailing the Mediterranean. (R) **5.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R) **5.25** New You've Been Framed! **5.55** Regional Programme ; Weather.

6.00 ITV News; Weather.

6.10 Ninja Warrior UK. The semi-finals arrive, and Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara challenge the contestants who survived the heats to test their endurance on the obstacle course once again. (R)

7.05 The X Factor: Live Final. Dermot O'Leary presents the first of two live grand finals, as the remaining singers compete for approval again, and one act faces the prospect of bowing out in third place.

9.10 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present the celebrity challenge, as the famous faces continue their ordeal in the Australian jungle.

10.15 ITV News; Weather.

10.35 Film: Rambo III. (1988) Vietnam veteran John Rambo turns down a request from his old colonel to join a mission in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan. However, when the officer is captured, Rambo sets off to save him, joining the Mujahedeen rebels in fighting against the Russian invaders. Action adventure sequel, starring Sylvester Stallone, Richard Crenna, Kurtwood Smith, Marc de Jonge and Sasson Gabai.

12.25 Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Adventure Racing: 4 Deserts. **6.45** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.40** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.05** Frasier. (R) **8.35** Frasier. (R) **9.05** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.35** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) **4.35** Best Laid Plans. **5.35** Grand Designs. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Can We Live with Robots? Dancer and choreographer Akram Khan explores the impact robots and AI are having on human relationships. Khan, who has spent a year researching important international news and condensing it into dance, travels from the UK to Japan and the USA to meet the scientists harnessing manufactured intelligence in ways that could see artificially intelligent constructs entering people's lives in the near future. His findings form the basis for a special dance, in which he hopes to reflect fears and scepticism over the subject.

8.00 Film: The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel. (2011) Seven English pensioners looking for a fresh start are drawn to an advert for a hotel in the Indian city of Jaipur, and plan to spend their retirement there. They arrive to find the building dilapidated but are won over by the enthusiastic young manager, and each embarks on their own adventures in the city. Comedy drama, starring Judi Dench, Bill Nighy, Maggie Smith and Dev Patel.

10.25 Film: I, Robot. (2004) A detective is convinced a robot has killed its creator, even though it has been programmed never to harm humans. Sci-fi thriller, with Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan and Alan Tudyk.

12.40 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **1.30** The Last Leg. Matt Lucas and Rebecca Front join the regulars. (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Marnie is concerned about Mac. **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.25** Draw It! (R) **5.55** Kevin Can Wait.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.00** FIA Formula E. **10.45** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.45** Cruising With Jane McDonald. **12.10 Film:** A Christmas to Remember. (2016) Festive romance, starring Mira Sorvino and Cameron Mathison. **1.50 Film:** Merry Kissmas! (2015) Romance, starring Karissa Staples and Brant Daugherty. **3.35 Film:** Annie Claus Is Coming to Town. (2011) Christmas fantasy, starring Maria Thayer. **4.35** 5 News Update. **4.45 Film:** Annie Claus Is Coming to Town. (2011) Concluded. **5.25 Film:** A Dream of Christmas. (2016) Premiere. Festive romance, starring Nikki DeLoach.

6.25 5 News Update.

6.30 Film: A Dream of Christmas. (2016) Concluded.

7.10 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Agents in central London try to recover almost £1,900 owed in parking fines, while officers Stewart and Vic chase over £2,200 owed by a scrap yard owner to a shipping company. Finally, Stewart and Vic head to Merseyside to recover over £3,500 owed by a publishing company to an unhappy ex-employee. (R)

8.05 NCIS: New Orleans. A US Marine corporal with a passion for amateur race-car driving suffers a fatal crash while on the track, and as the agents investigate, they begin to suspect the collision might not have been as accidental as it first seemed.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Derby County v Burton Albion from Pride Park, Sunderland v Reading from The Stadium of Light, and Bristol City v Middlesbrough from Ashton Gate.

10.00 Live Boxing. Anthony Yigit v Joe Hughes. Coverage of the bout for the European Super-Lightweight title, which takes place at Leicester Arena.

12.00 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** When Calls the Heart. Jack is reassigned. (R) **4.40** Access. Showbiz news and gossip. (R) **4.55** House Doctor. Transforming a dingy Cheltenham house. (R) **5.20** Wildlife SOS. The work of an animal sanctuary. (R) **5.45** Chinese Food in Minutes. Two nurses learn to cook traditional oriental dishes. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Ancient Egypt: Life and Death in the Valley of the Kings **8.00** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **9.00** Witnesses: A Frozen Death **10.45** The Vietnam War **11.40** What a Performance! Pioneers of Popular Entertainment **12.40** Burt Bacharach: A Life in Song **2.10** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **3.10** Close

ITV2

12.45 Take Me Out **1.45 Film:** The Lake House (2006) **2.45** FYI Daily **2.50 Film:** The Lake House (2006) **3.50** You've Been Framed! at Christmas **4.50** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **6.15 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **7.15** FYI Daily **7.20 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **8.10 Film:** Wrath of the Titans (2012) **9.10** FYI Daily **9.15 Film:** Wrath of the Titans (2012) **10.15** I'm a Celebrity: Extra Camp **11.15** Family Guy **12.45** American Dad! **1.40** Release the Hounds **2.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

11.00 Film: Columbo: How to Dial a Murder (1978) **12.40** Agatha Christie's Marple **2.45 Film:** Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) **3.50** FYI Daily **3.55 Film:** Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) **5.00** Midsomer Murders **1.10** Wycliffe **2.05** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

2.55 Storage Wars: Best of the Appraisals **3.25 Film:** Superman (1978) **4.25** FYI Daily **4.30 Film:** Superman (1978) **6.20 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **7.20** FYI Daily **7.25 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **8.10 Film:** The Nutty Professor (1996) **9.10** FYI Daily **9.15 Film:** The Nutty Professor (1996) **10.00 Film:** 16 Blocks (2006) **11.00** FYI Daily **11.05 Film:** 16 Blocks (2006) **12.05 Film:** Senna (2010) **1.05** FYI Daily **1.10 Film:** Senna (2010) **2.20** River Monsters **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.00 The Goldbergs **12.00 Film:** Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010) **1.55** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.00** The Goldbergs **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** A Good Day to Die Hard (2013) **11.00** Gogglebox **1.05** Tattoo Fixers **2.05** Rude Tube **3.05** Gogglebox **3.55** Rude Tube **4.20** Rules of Engagement

Film4

1.00 The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992) **2.45** Letters to Juliet (2010) **4.50** Miracle on 34th Street (1947) **6.55** The Tourist (2010) **9.00** Solace (2015) **11.05** The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (2013) **1.40** Hercules (1983) **3.50** Close

Mary Stevens Hospice Charity Shop in Kingswinford recently had a make over making the shop much lighter and brighter giving their customers a better shopping experience.

Opened

When the shop first opened almost 16 years ago they mainly sold large furniture like Wardrobes, beds, welsh dressers and living room units.

Barbra who has been working in the shop as a volunteer since the very opening said "we decided to sell less off the larger furniture a few years ago to keep the cost of logistics and help our carbon footprint"

Easier

The shop still stocks furniture but as shop manager Hilary explained " the furniture we sell now is what we call walk in walk out, the customers can literally purchase the furniture and walk out of the shop with it, so small tables, chest of draws and small cabinets are easier to get home for the customers"

Mary Stevens Hospice charity shops still stock larger item furniture in other stores dotted around other local High Streets, including Stourbridge, Dudley, Cradley Heath and Blackheath. Call 0800 566 8540 for details.

Since the shop decided to change focus the clothing, shoes, wool,books, cd's, and general bric a brac side of the business has seen a large increase in popularity with its loyal and new customers.

With Christmas almost on our doorstep the shop is also a fantastic place to pick up your Christmas Cards and gifts .

Volunteers

And with the Christmas lights switch on in Kingswinford this weekend what better time to give the shop a visit .

Always on the lookout for the new volunteers to help out in the shop Manager Hilary said " If you feel you could spare a few hours per week to help a very good cause then just pop in for a chat, if I'm not here you can always speak to Sophie, our assistant manager"

Skills

Mary Stevens Hospice Trading Company need volunteers across all the shops based in and around the West Midlands so if you want to meet new people, learn new skills and help a local Hospice then call Debbie or one of the team on 01384 671149 or email volunteering@mshtrading.co

So next time you're in town pop in and see the new Kingswinford Mary Stevens Charity Shop, there's something for everyone .

SUNDAY'S TV DECEMBER 3

CHOICE

Julie Walters

Coastal Railways with Julie Walters
(Channel 4, 8pm)
The actress and national treasure's second journey takes her from Newcastle upon Tyne to Edinburgh by high-speed train. Along the way, she stops off at the picturesque coastal village of Alnmouth, nicknamed the Tobermory of Northumberland. Here, Julie discovers where the phrase Keep Calm and Carry On originated, at a bookshop in the village, before visiting the world's biggest gannet colony – Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth. Next, she goes out to sea with a lobster breeder, and when she reaches her final destination, the Scottish capital, she discovers the connection between the railway and the world-famous Balmoral Hotel.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.25** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Stefanie Reid. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** BBC News; Weather. **12.30** Flog It! (R) **12.50** Mary Berry's Country House Secrets. (R) **1.50** FA Cup Final Score. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.55** Blue Planet II. (R) **5.55** BBC News.

6.10 Regional Programme.

6.20 Countryfile. Helen Skelton and Sean Fletcher explore the Cleveland Way. Helen meets a group of marathon runners and a scout team who have taken responsibility for a stretch of the area, while Sean finds out about a local oral history project and joins a wildlife photographer documenting leaping salmon. Plus, Tom Heap reports on the impact of climate change and Adam Henson finds out how to become a farmer without owning a farm.

7.20 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal the results of the Musicals Week viewers' vote. Featuring music from Beverley Knight, Amber Riley and Cassidy Janson.

8.00 Blue Planet II. Footage of animals that live on the coast, including sea lions working in packs to hunt tuna in the shallows and moray eels that venture out of the water to seek out food on dry rocks. Puffins must brave predators to bring a mouthful of food back to their young and king penguins go without food for a month while they moult. Plus, footage of the bizarre Leaping Blenny, a fish that hates the water.

9.00 Howards End. Margaret resolves to uphold her engagement, while Helen leaves for Europe with no explanation. Henry proposes a plan to resolve the issues at Howards End. Last in the series.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Manchester City v West Ham United at the Etihad Stadium and Bournemouth v Southampton at the Vitality Stadium.

11.30 Ronny Chieng: International Student.

11.55 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.00 BBC News.

BBC2

7.05 Gardeners' World. (R) **7.35** The Secret History of the British Garden. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Food & Drink. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship. Coverage of the fifth day at the Barbican Centre in York.

6.00 MOTD: FA Cup Highlights. Manish Bhasin introduces action from the second round, as the remaining 40 lower league and non-league sides looked to move a step closer to a potentially lucrative and glamourous tie in the third round.

7.00 Turkey with Simon Reeve. In the second half of the journey, Simon travels along the Black Sea Coast to the capital of Ankara and the Northern Highlands, witnessing first hand the aftermath of fighting in Kurdish areas and meeting a conservationist attempting to preserve the region's brown bears. He then returns to Istanbul, where he takes part in a popular TV series set in the palace of the Ottoman Sultans. (R)

8.00 Robot Wars. Dara Ó Briain and Angela Scanlon present the grand final, which features the biggest ever Robot Wars battle. One of the six places in the last round remains free, and to decide who gets it, all the contestants who came second or third in the past five episodes return to battle to the death. The winner in this Ten Robot Rumble will have to face the five episode winners through a series of group battles and knockout rounds before the final showdown to decide which machine will be crowned series champion. Last in the series.

9.00 Expedition Volcano. Part two of two. The team takes a helicopter to the crater of an active volcano that is surrounded by forests which provide cover for a number of armed militant groups.

10.00 Snowfall. Franklin discovers that it was Lenny who came after him, and is forced to fight back or lose everything. Lucia is powerless to stop Ramiro taking over everything she has created.

10.45 Snowfall. Franklin finds success comes at a price. Last in the series.

11.40 Snooker: UK Championship.

12.30 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. **2.30** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **3.30** Holby City. (R) **4.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Make It Pop. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Australian Wilderness with Ray Mears. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **10.55** The Martin Lewis Money Show. (R) **11.25** Save Money: Good Food. (R) **12.00** Tipping Point. (R) **1.00** ITV News; Weather. **1.05** The X Factor: Live Final. (R) **3.10** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.05** How to Spend It Well at Christmas with Phillip Schofield. (R)

6.05 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 The Chase Celebrity Special. Gregg Wallace, Denise Lewis, Mark Pougatch and Gina Yashere answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh.

7.25 The X Factor: Live Final. Dermot O'Leary introduces the climax of this year's talent contest. The results of last night's performance at Wembley Arena are in and one of the three finalists has been eliminated from the contest. The two remaining acts must give one final performance to impress the viewing public and the judges, before one of them is crowned as this year's winner. Last in the series.

9.00 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present the celebrity challenge, as the famous faces continue their ordeal in the Australian jungle.

10.30 ITV News; Weather.

10.45 Peston on Sunday. Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston and Allegra Stratton. Last in the series. (R)

11.45 Car Crash Britain: Caught on Camera. Road accidents and near-misses, including a woman who had a close shave when a car ploughed into her office, parallel parking calamities and a new driver with no beginners' luck. (R)

12.35 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Kevin Can Wait. **6.45** Kevin Can Wait. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Paul Hollywood: A Baker's Life. (R) **1.00** F1 2017: Hamilton's Record Breaking Season. **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.55** The Simpsons. (R) **3.25** The Simpsons. (R) **3.55 Film:** Arthur Christmas. (2011) Animated comedy, with the voice of James McAvoy. **5.50 Film:** Shrek. (2001) Animated comedy, with the voice of Mike Myers.

7.30 Channel 4 News.

8.00 Coastal Railways with Julie Walters. The actress travels from Newcastle to Edinburgh by high speed train. Along the way, she stops off at the coastal town of Alnmouth, discovers where the phrase Keep Calm and Carry On originated, visits the world's biggest gannet colony, and goes out to sea with a lobster breeder. When she reaches her destination, she discovers the connection between the railway and the famous Balmoral Hotel.

9.00 Film: Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol. (2011) Secret agent Ethan Hunt and his team are implicated in a bombing at the Kremlin, forcing the American president to declare them fugitives. The spies plan to clear their name by abducting the real terrorist, which leads them into a pursuit around the globe. However, Hunt cannot be sure his colleagues are trustworthy. Action adventure sequel, starring Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg and Paula Patton.

11.35 Film: I, Frankenstein. (2014) The scientist's monster is caught up in a war between supernatural beings who want the secret of his immortality. Fantasy adventure, with Aaron Eckhart and Bill Nighy.

1.15 Film: Morning Glory. (2010) Comedy, starring Rachel McAdams. **3.00** Trump: An American Dream. A new wife, a hit TV show and the ultimate prize in world politics. Last in the series. (R) **3.55** Gillette World Sport. Including a profile of fixed-gear cyclist Patrick Seabase. **4.25** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **4.50** Mobil 1 The Grid. (R) **5.20** Kirstie's Handmade Treasures. (R) **5.35** Countdown. With Richard Madeley in Dictionary Corner. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Wissper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **6.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Digby Dragon. **7.30** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.45** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.55** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.10** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.25** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **8.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **8.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **8.55** FIA Formula E. **10.40** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.25 Film:** Finding Father Christmas. (2016) **1.10 Film:** The Christmas Secret. (2014) Drama, starring Bethany Joy Lenz. **2.55 Film:** On the 12th Day of Christmas. (2015) Premiere. Romantic drama, starring Brooke Nevin and Robin Dunne. **3.55** 5 News Update. **4.00 Film:** On the 12th Day of Christmas. (2015) Concluded. **4.45 Film:** Northpole: Open for Christmas. (2015) Premiere. Festive fantasy sequel, starring Bailee Madison. **5.45** 5 News Update. **5.50 Film:** Northpole: Open for Christmas. (2015) Concluded.

6.30 Film: Call Me Claus. (2001) A cynical female TV producer hires a man to play Santa Claus in a programme. He turns out to be the real Father Christmas, and has come on a special mission to melt her icy heart and persuade her to take over the reindeer reins as the new face of the festive season. Family drama, starring Whoopi Goldberg, Nigel Hawthorne, Brian Mitchell and Victor Garber.

8.15 Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights. Mark Durden-Smith and David Flatman present action from the 10th round of matches, including Northampton Saints v Newcastle Falcons, Exeter Chiefs v Bath, and Harlequins v Saracens.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 The Paul O'Grady Story. Profile of the talk show host, exploring his formative years as a social worker and showbiz career appearing as both himself and his drag act alter ego Lily Savage. (R)

10.35 When Reality TV Goes Horribly Wrong. Vicky Pattison narrates a countdown of disastrous incidents on reality shows, featuring Nikki Grahame, Bianca Gascoigne, Paul Danan and Jessie Cave.

1.30 Lip Sync Battle UK: Carol Vorderman v Martin Kemp. (R) **1.55** SuperCasino. **3.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in Blackpool. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Great Continental Railway Journeys **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Classic Quartets at the BBC **9.00** Natural World **10.40** Britain's Wild Places **11.00 Film:** Taxi Tehran (2015) **12.20** Classic Quartets at the BBC **1.20** Natural World **3.00** Close

ITV2
11.25 Take Me Out **12.40** You've Been Framed! at Christmas **1.10** Merry Christmas Mr Bean **1.45** The Smurfs: A Christmas Carol **2.15 Film:** Beethoven's Christmas Adventure (2011) **3.15** FYI Daily **3.20 Film:** Beethoven's Christmas Adventure (2011) **4.05** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **5.10 Film:** Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang (2010) **6.15** FYI Daily **6.20 Film:** Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang (2010) **7.20 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **10.30** I'm a Celebrity: Extra Camp **11.35** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.30** Release the Hounds **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
11.30 FYI Daily **11.35 Film:** Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) **12.40 Film:** Columbo: Death Hits the Jackpot (1991) **2.45** Agatha Christie's Marple **4.50** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Endeavour **11.00** Lewis **1.00** The Knock **3.00** Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four **4.50** Judge Judy **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
11.30 Film: Superman (1978) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35 Film:** Superman (1978) **2.25 Film:** The Dam Busters (1954) **3.25** FYI Daily **3.30 Film:** The Dam Busters (1954) **5.00** British Touring Car Championship Highlights **7.05 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **8.05** FYI Daily **8.10 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **9.00 Film:** The Dictator (2012) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** The Dictator (2012) **10.40 Film:** Hot Tub Time Machine 2 (2015) **11.40** FYI Daily **11.45 Film:** Hot Tub Time Machine 2 (2015) **12.30 Film:** Mars Attacks! (1996) **1.30** FYI Daily **1.35 Film:** Mars Attacks! (1996) **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
11.00 Made in Chelsea **12.00** Don't Tell the Bride **1.00 Film:** Marmaduke (2010) **2.45** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **3.00** The Goldbergs **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Ted (2012) **11.05** The Big Bang Theory **12.05** Gogglebox **1.05** Rude Tube **2.10** First Dates **3.05** Rude Tube **3.35** Hollyoaks

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
The Christmas Calendar, Channel 5, 3.45pm
Emily has just taken over her grandmother's failing bakery and discovers that if she doesn't attract enough customers by Christmas, she will lose it. Finding new customers proves tough, but when she receives a handmade Advent calendar from a secret admirer, the local residents become obsessed with finding out the identity of the sender. Festive romantic drama, starring Laura Bell Bundy. (2017)

TUESDAY
Call Me Claus, Channel 5, 3.40pm
A cynical female TV producer hires a man to play Santa Claus in a programme. He turns out to be the real Father Christmas, and has come on a special mission to melt her icy heart and persuade her to take over the reindeer reins as the new face of the festive season. Family drama, starring Whoopi Goldberg, Nigel Hawthorne and Victor Garber. (2001)

Brick Mansions, Thursday, Channel 5, 9pm

WEDNESDAY
Spirit of Christmas, Channel 5, 2pm
When brokering the sale of a haunted inn, a lawyer meets a charming ghost who lives there, and she ends up agreeing to help him discover the truth behind his death. Romantic drama, starring Jen Lilley and Thomas Beaudoin. (2015)

THURSDAY
Brick Mansions, Channel 5, 9pm
A ghetto of Detroit is walled off from the rest of the city to contain its criminal population. A cop out for revenge and an ex-convict trying to save his kidnapped girlfriend are forced to team up to stop a drug kingpin carrying out a plan that could destroy the entire city. US remake of French action adventure District 13, starring Paul Walker. (2014)

FRIDAY
Christmas Under Wraps, Channel 5, 3.45pm
When a doctor fails to get the position she wanted, she ends up moving to a remote Alaskan town and unexpectedly ends up finding love and happiness, and discovers that the small town is hiding a big holiday secret. Drama, starring Candace Cameron Bure, David O'Donnell and Robert Pine. (2014)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Kirstie gets in the festive spirit in new one-off show

What started out as a pleasant diversion is turning into a national institution.

In 2009, Kirstie Allsopp – who was previously best known for her property expertise thanks to the show Location Location Location – fronted Kirstie's Handmade Home, in which she decorated her new Devon house with craft items she made herself.

The format has since widened to encompass Kirstie's Handmade Britain, Kirstie's Vintage Home, Fill Your House for Free, and several other shows, including this now annual festive series.

In the meantime, Allsopp is also the face of The Handmade Fair, which takes place every September at Hampton Court, and offers visitors an opportunity to meet makers and buy the materials needed to produce their own crafty products.

It's certainly a far cry from selling properties. In the years since her first dabble into the world of the handmade, crafts have really risen in popularity, with thousands across the country taking up knitting, crochet, sewing, baking, woodwork and more.

Did Allsopp's show and others along similar lines inspire folk, or did they reflect an already growing trend that began as the public attempted to find ways to save money in an uncertain economic climate? That's a topic still up for discussion, but whatever the answer, it seems that for the foreseeable future, crafts are here to stay.

For Allsopp, taking part in the programmes has turned a casual interest into a passion.

"I think it's always interested me, but I never thought I was capable of doing it," she says of the crafting world. "So I would buy it. I'd see something that was made with love and care, and I would purchase it. I never really thought I was capable of that.

"I was a very early advocate of the immaculate Christmas, making a big effort with that kind of stuff. But it was a surprising discovery for me that I was capable of making things myself."

However, she does admit defeat in some areas, but thinks that a fear of failure shouldn't put people off trying new things.

"The ones that I can't get good at involve knitting, crocheting, cross-stitching - I just can't feel my way towards them," she admits. "But a lot of the crafts are made much, much more difficult on the show by the time aspect, and by having the cameras there.

"There are times when you see me throwing a wobbly, but the truth is, I'm throwing a wobbly at the process of being filmed while under this kind of pressure. That is what gets to you - because you are doing this flower arrangement, for example, and someone will say 'Kirstie, can you talk about what you're feeling now?'"

Hopefully no wobblers will be thrown in the first of the latest run, which sees Allsopp get the ball rolling with a detailed handmade fairy and delicate diorama baubles.

Kirstie's Handmade Christmas, Tuesday, Channel 4, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
The Real Marigold on Tour
BBC1, 9pm
The familiar faces are back, but this time they're not heading for India – instead, they're hitting the road for a variety of geriatric adventures. Each destination will be visited by a different group, but they all have two things in common - to learn how countries across the globe treat their pensioners, and to find out if they could live there themselves. It's a four-part run that begins when Miriam Margolyes, Wayne Sleep, Bobby George and Rosemary Shrager travel to Chengdu, the capital of China's Sichuan Province. More than 14 million people live there, and the population is ageing fast. It isn't Miriam's first trip to the country, but she struggles with the food while all of the travellers find the language barrier rather difficult to surmount.

TUESDAY
Extraordinary Teens: My Gay Life
Channel 4, 10pm
There are shades of Richard Linklater's acclaimed, Oscar-winning drama Boyhood to this documentary – except this film charts real events in the life of the child we are watching grow up before our very eyes. The project began in 2011, when cameras first captured a then 11-year-old boy called Billy. Over the course of five years, the film-makers followed the youngster, charting his teenage life. The result is a portrait not just of one boy, but of childhood, adolescence and family.

WEDNESDAY
Mary Berry's Country House Secrets
BBC1, 8pm
Mary visits Powderham Castle in Devon to spend time with the Earl and Countess of Devon and their two young children, who are reinventing the Earldom for the 21st century. Mary's time with the family reveals stories of romance and tragedy as she discovers more of this extraordinary home. In the castle's historic kitchen, Mary prepares a Devon cream tea, before making a delicate peach posset for a Midsummer Eve woodland party the family are throwing to celebrate their two year anniversary at the castle.

THURSDAY
Great Canal Journeys
Channel 4, 8pm
Timothy West and Prunella Scales return to Wales to explore a canal that has eluded them for more than half a century. The Monmouthshire and Brecon canal is cut off from the rest of Britain's network of waterways by the Black Mountains, and meanders its way through the tranquil Usk valley. Along the way the couple visit the old ironworks at Blaenavon, where children as young as five were once put to work, and lend a hand with some lock restoration work. They also explore the 15th-century castle at Tretower - which is rumoured to be haunted.

The Real Marigold on Tour, Monday, BBC1, 9pm

FRIDAY
Brunel: The Man Who Built Britain
Channel 5, 8pm
Victorian visionary Isambard Kingdom Brunel is still regarded as one of Britain's greatest ever engineers – which is probably just the way he'd like it. In this two-part documentary, Rob Bell takes closer look at both Brunel's extraordinary achievements and the complex personality that drove them, and discovers that he was obsessed with public acclaim. He would also stop at nothing to bring his projects to fruition – as well as risking his own life, hundreds of people were killed while working for him. In the first episode, Rob examines Brunel's first major project, the Thames Tunnel, which is still in use today as part of the London Overground rail. Construction began in 1825, under the direction of Brunel's father Marc, while Isambard was appointed chief engineer at the age of just 19.

The Year in Music 2017
BBC2, 9pm
Last year, most of the music retrospectives seemed to focus on the big names we'd lost in 2016, including David Bowie, Prince and Leonard Cohen. But hopefully, this end-of-the-year round-up will prove to be a more celebratory affair as Claudia Winkleman and Clara Amfo look back at the musical highlights from the past 12 months, including the best albums, the biggest artists and some of the most unforgettable performances. Among the stars offering their take on 2017 are the Foo Fighters, Liam Gallagher, Stormzy, Nile Rodgers, Dua Lipa, Nick Grimshaw, Mistajam, and Jo Whiley, while Rag ën' Bone Man obliges with an exclusive performance. And just to confirm who's had a good year, the winners of the 2017 BBC Music Awards will be announced.

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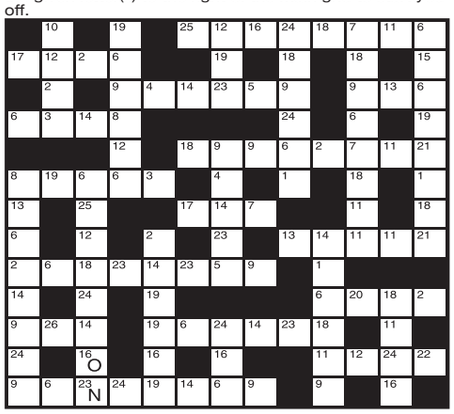
BRAIN GYM

No.458

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



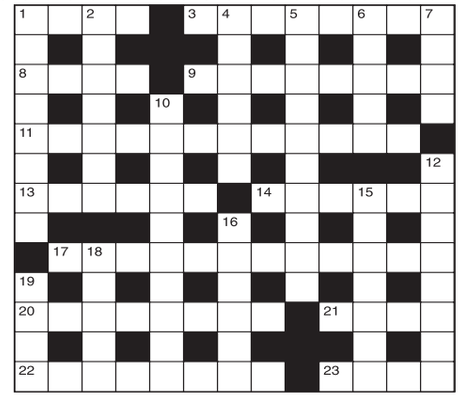
1	14
2	15
3	16 O
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23 N
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
O	A	J	B	P	M	D	W	Z	T	S	G	I
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
U	L	E	H	F	C	R	N	K	V	Y	Q	X

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Lay off the wine (4)
3. Agitated girl with unusually neat figure (8)
8. Puts away in great style (4)
9. One way of saying one doesn't like it (8)
11. Progressed with amorous overtures? (4,8)
13. Concerning bets on races (6)
14. Walk slowly along the street with a list (6)
17. One of the smoothest parts of the course (7,5)
20. Remained and gave personal service (6,2)
21. Something final to any buffoon (4)
22. Threatening to re-adjust my ration (8)
23. Bank of Scotland (4)

Down

1. Vessels pilots take in the morning (8)
2. Keep changing dialect (7)
4. Always come up about six to refresh (6)
5. It provides an opportunity for advanced theatrical work (5,5)
6. A leading publication? (5)
7. A misshapen nose ages (4)
10. Simple way in which the affluent live (4,6)
12. Learnt by arrangement in Malawi (8)
15. One pair moved out of doors (4,3)
16. People enter for this sort of sport (6)
18. A joining of hands in marriage or work (5)
19. In tennis Wimbledon is one way to make progress (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Image (4)
3. Set going (8)
8. Row (4)
9. Promontory (8)
11. Falsify (12)
13. Topics (6)
14. Fitting (6)
17. Betterment (12)
20. Baffle (8)
21. Despicable (4)
22. Scornful (8)
23. Dam across a river (4)

Down

1. Familiar (8)
2. Superintend (7)
4. Joyous (6)
5. Manufacturing (10)
6. Once more (5)
7. Whirlpool (4)
10. Insubordinate (10)
12. Majesty (8)
15. Archbishop (7)
16. Woodworker (6)
18. Lesser (5)
19. Frozen (4)

Sudoku

7			5				1	
		3			1	6	8	
9				7				2
	1	7	9				2	4
				2	3			
6	9				7	5		1
1					2			
	5	4	7			2		
	3				8		7	5

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	5	8	7	6	4	2	3	9
4	9	2	8	3	1	6	7	5
6	7	3	9	2	5	1	8	4
7	1	5	6	8	3	9	4	2
8	4	6	1	9	2	7	5	3
3	2	9	5	4	7	8	1	6
2	3	7	4	1	6	5	9	8
9	6	1	3	5	8	4	2	7
5	8	4	2	7	9	3	6	1

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Obsolescent; 9 Isolate; 10 Lisle; 11 Hindi; 12 Dentist; 13 Impend; 15 Scorer; 18 Good day; 20 Lyric; 22 Least; 23 Leisure; 24 Secretaries. Down: 2 Brown; 3 Ovation; 4 Emends; 5 Colon; 6 Nastier; 7 Nightingale; 8 Test cricket; 14 Profane; 16 Collier; 17 Eyelet; 19 Deter; 21 Rouse. QUICK - Across: 1 Furthermore; 9 Stirrup; 10 Given; 11 Anele; 12 Ontario; 13 Levity; 15 Asleep; 18 Surplus; 20 Trait; 22 Edict; 23 Elation; 24 Undertaking. Down: 2 Unite; 3 Torrent; 4 Employ; 5 Might; 6 Reverie; 7 Established; 8 Incompetent; 14 Version; 16 Set-back; 17 Assent; 19 Lithe; 21 Alien.

Quiz

1. Whose husband was King Prasutagus?
2. Of which country is the Orszaggyules the national assembly?
3. Which heavyweight boxer collapsed after his defeat by Herbie Hide?
4. Which Mr Moto star was born Laszlo Loewenstein?
5. Where was the first Test match between England and Australia played in 1880?
6. Who is the Greek counterpart of the Roman Jupiter?
7. In which country did kung fu originate?
8. Which fruit comes from the plant Rubus idaeus?
9. Which condition was treated by the Kenny method?
10. Who won a director's Oscar for The Last Emperor?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Dyslexia or alexia; 2 A bird; 3 The Wombles; 4 Elvis Costello; 5 William McKinley; 6 Parrot; 7 Dawn French; 8 Films; 9 Asteroid; 10 Sir Lancelot.

Niner: CAVERNOUS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

51381 gives a colour,
87114 gives a second colour,
9612 gives coloured.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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A taste of quality Indian cuisine

Famed for its horn dance and its Best Kept Village success, Abbots Bromley has another thing worth putting it on the map – the Royal Ruchi restaurant.

This year, parishioners tasted double success in the large village category for East Staffordshire and the Community Council of Staffordshire's trophy for the whole county. And, to celebrate, they had a sample of what was on offer at the Bagot Street eatery with a six-course taster menu.

While the traditional horn dance dates back to the Middle Ages, the Royal Ruchi has only just over a decade of service to the village to fall back upon. It has a country cottage feel, with beams across the ceiling and has a subtle warm colour scheme.

Royal Ruchi in Abbots Bromley

The lamb course was a highlight of the evening

INDULGE

Owner Rafique Chowdhury has 30-plus years experience within the industry, having previously owned Saleem Bagh in Cannock and the Zafroni restaurants in both Cannock and Birmingham.

Its tasting menu is designed to increase the knowledge of the average Indian foodie while at the same time enhancing the Indian culinary experience. It allows the diner to sit back and not worry about what to choose from the menu, but instead to anticipate and indulge in the next offering.

My husband and I were greeted by Mr Chowdhury and his enganging staff and we were escorted to our table. Our welcome drinks of a glass of lemon sherbet and gin topped with Prosecco made the perfect start.

The first course presented to us was the Amuse Bouche, a spiced masala chicken soup with dhal puri – described as a mother's fresh homemade breakfast item cooked on Saturday mornings in the homes of Delhi. It was served with soft puffed bread filled with mildly spiced lentils – one of my favourites from the evening. For the second course, subz trio consisted of three small starter samples, namely chilli paneer – cubes of cottage cheese tossed with chilli; gol gappa – a crowd-pleasing Indian street food snack and aloo tikka – mashed potato patties mixed with spices, a north Indian delicacy found in the cafe-style eateries. We were pleasantly surprised by both.

Fish was the third course, comprising pan-grilled fillet of sea bass served on a bed of Goan creamy cheese spinach. The presentation was subtle, yet stunning and the sea bass was cooked to perfection. Next up was a sample of three different chicken options served with a salad mix. Murgh dalcha – delicately spiced chicken cutlets; malia tikka – Tandoori cooked chicken supreme and Hariyali tikka – chicken breast rubbed with an intoxicating paste. Again all three were thoroughly enjoyed.

We were next presented with the lamb course, their signature supreme carved Maharaja roast lamb, marinated in Mughal spices, served with moong chana daal, rice and freshly baked Tandoori bread. It looked and tasted magnificent – the star of the evening for us.

But there was more! The dessert was served on a slate plate, and consisted of three mini puds; rose gulab jamun – a berry sized sphere soaked in rose flavoured sugar syrup; tusha shinni– a lightly spiced, soft, sweet dessert, a recipe passed down from the chef's ancestors and sweet caramel ice cream.

The food and service was quality and Mr Chowdhury's passion to showcase all that was on offer was evident. Book at Royal Ruchi on 01283 840008.

BY SHARON OSCAR

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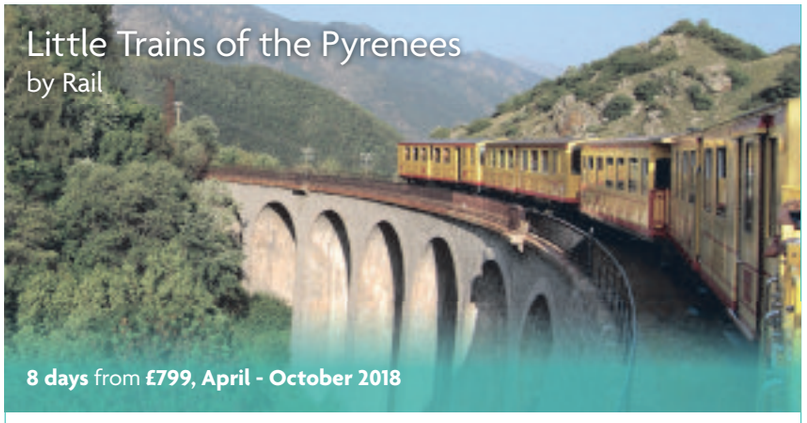
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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Spacious bungalow in sought-after spot is well maintained

Delightfully located within a small and highly sought-after cul-de-sac, 8 Edale Close, Kingswinford, lies close to the fringes of beautiful open countryside.

Requiring some updating, it is for sale through Taylors Estate Agents at £209,950 with no chain.

The spacious and well-maintained layout includes an entrance hall, a large attractive lounge, a kitchen, an inner hall, two bedrooms, a full width lean-to garden room and shower room.

The property is set back beyond the front lawn with a driveway, garage and a small private rear garden.

Edale Close forms part of the sought-after "Briars Wood/Briars Croft" development, which, whilst pleasantly "tucked away" is very well placed for local amenities including shops, restaurants available in nearby Wall Heath and Kingswinford and regular public transport services. There is also easy access to surrounding towns and villages.

The bungalow is warmed by gas central heating.

In more detail the entrance hall has a built-in cloaks cupboard and a door opening to the large lounge.

The kitchen has a range of light wood trim units including a stainless steel sink drainer with a mixer tap. The units include a recess for a cooker, recess for a fridge/freezer plus the breakfast bar with wall cabinets above. Opposite is a recess and plumbing for a washing machine, further cupboard storage space, a wall-mounted gas boiler, a door to the side and built-in storage.

From an inner hall you access bedroom one with fitted bedroom furniture. Bedroom two has a sliding door to the garden room which runs the full width of the property.

The shower room has a coloured suite including a shower cubicle with an electric shower, pedestal wash basin and low level flush WC.

Outside, the property is set back beyond the front garden with a driveway alongside which enables off-road parking and an approach to the garage. The small private rear garden includes a broad paved patio area with a small established and well-planted garden area beyond, all having a private aspect.

KINGSWINFORD £209,950

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Taylors Estate Agents

TEL: 01384 401777

EMAIL: Kingswinford@taylors-estateagents.co.uk

KEY FEATURES

Impressive detached bungalow
Spacious & well maintained
2 bedrooms
Driveway/garage/small rear garden
No chain

K. Stuart Swash

AUCTION - 12TH DECEMBER 2017

51 TURLS HILL ROAD, SEDGLEY, DY3 1HQ

Ripe for refurbishment - generous corner plot, Two Reception, Kitchen, Four Beds, Bathroom, Gas CH, Garage, Outbuilding. Epc: F33.

Guide £110,000 / £115,000.

Viewing: Friday & Saturday, 1st & 2nd December @ 9.45 a.m.

LAWLEY ROAD, BILSTON, WV14 0NB

Residential Building Land. Planning Permission granted for 4 Semi-Detached Three Bedroomed Houses - cul-de-sac location. Established residential area.

Guide £115,000 / £120,000.

62 COTON ROAD, PENN, WV4 5AT

Attractive individual Bungalow - some modernisation needed, 18ft Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas CH., Basement Stores, Garage, terraced Garden. Epc: TBA.

Guide £159,000

Viewing: Friday & Saturday, 1st & 2nd December @ 11.00 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE: Viewing of all Lots at own risk. Viewings are at the times specified so, should you arrive late, you may find your viewing time is limited or that we have moved on in order to maintain the time schedule.

2, Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton | 01902 710626 / 424044 E-mail: swashauctions@btconnect.com | www.kstuartswash.co.uk

PROPERTY

This two-bed apartment is ideal for many buyers

A well presented and well proportioned two-bedroomed modern first floor flat in Garrick Close, Earls Keep, Dudley, is for sale through Wakeman Estate Agents at £119,950 with no chain.

Having gas central heating and double glazing, it is an ideal buy as an investment or for those wanting to downsize, or for a first-time buyer.

EARLS KEEP

£119,950

It has a communal entrance hall, an entrance hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom one with en-suite, bedroom two, a spacious bathroom, communal gardens and two allocated parking spaces.

This home lies in a popular and established residential area, convenient for Dudley and with a wide range of amenities readily available.

In more detail the home has a video entry phone system.

For further information contact Wakeman on 01384 459999.

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CGI of The Elvedon 2 bedroom home at Elderwood Place. Elevations and finishes may vary. *Carpets available on plot 69 only, subject to terms and conditions. **Help to buy available upon request subject to terms and conditions.

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SEDGLEY, Off Wolverhampton Road

●●SEDGLEY BESPOKE PROPERTY WITH THE WOW FACTOR WHICH RARELY COMES ON SALE!●● Exquisitely presented PERIOD DETACHED FAMILY home situated on its own private drive in a sought after, secluded & unique location in Sedgley. Set within sweeping gardens & with STUNNING views, this generously sized property has so much to offer. Boasting entrance hallway, three reception rooms, handcrafted kitchen-diner, guest W/C, utility room, THREE DOUBLE BEDROOMS, two bathrooms, double garage and enormous gravelled driveway to front. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC E SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £575,000

New

HIMLEY, Churns Hill Lane

An IMPRESSIVE and BEAUTIFULLY IMPROVED DETACHED BUNGALOW for those of 55 years and above, which is superbly placed within Himley Village. Including hall, generous lounge, conservatory, refitted kitchen with appliances, two bedrooms and shower room. BLOCK PAVED DRIVEWAY and ADDITIONAL REAR CAR PARKING SPACE EPC C

No upward chain **£239,950**

WOMBOURNE, Planks Lane

An IMPRESSIVE SEMI DETACHED FAMILY HOME, set back beyond the GENEROUS FRONT DRIVEWAY with GARAGE and a GOOD SIZED LEVEL & SUNNY REAR GARDEN, superbly located within Wombourne village, offering a VERY WELL PRESENTED layout including THREE LARGE BEDROOMS. EPC D

£209,950

New

LOWER GORNAL, Winrush Close

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Stylishly presented modern link-detached property in the highly desirable area of Lower Gornal. Within walking distance of Gornal village, local schools, bus stops and other amenities, this good-sized family home also benefits from gas central heating, double glazing, entrance porch guest W/C, living room, kitchen-diner, THREE BEDROOMS with en-suite to master, family bathroom, garage, enclosed rear garden, driveway and garden to front. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £195,500

PENSNETT, Tiled House Lane

This RATHER SUBSTANTIAL & MOST IMPRESSIVE, THREE BEDROOM, TRADITIONAL STYLE, DETACHED PROPERTY in brief comprises: Spacious Hall, Lovely Through Lounge, Modern Kitchen, Contemporary Bathroom, Utility, Driveway, Garage & Large Garden. EPC: F

£179,950

COSELEY, The Paddock

Set in well-regarded cul-de-sac & conveniently situated for local shopping facilities & transport routes including Coseley Train station & enjoying views overlooking cricket grounds to rear. An impressive, gas centrally heated & mostly double glazed Link-Detached which comprises; porch, living room, refitted dining kitchen, conservatory, utility room, guest WC, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom, garage, rear garden with block-paved driveway offering parking to front. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £179,950

New

LOWER GORNAL, Wallows Wood

Enviously situated on The Straits in Lower Gornal, this traditional semi-detached property offers, entrance porch, hallway, through lounge-diner, extended kitchen, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom, garage, enclosed rear garden backing onto a stream and fields and driveway to fore. Offered with NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating TBC. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £174,950

SEDGLEY, Fir Tree Drive, High Arcal

NO UPWARD CHAIN. A tastefully presented semi-detached property occupying a corner position on a quiet cul-de-sac in the popular High Arcal estate in Sedgley. This modern family home benefits from central heating and double glazing as well as an entrance hall, guest W/C, well-appointed lounge, kitchen, diner, THREE BEDROOMS, family bathroom, good sized rear garden with parking for multiple vehicles to front. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £159,950

KINGSWINFORD, Freeland Grove

A SUCCESSFULLY EXTENDED SEMI DETACHED FAMILY HOME which enjoys a sought after cul de sac location, offering a VERY WELL PRESENTED & GENEROUS layout of accommodation which includes THREE BEDROOMS. With LARGE DRIVEWAY, small GARAGE/ Store and a very pleasant garden. EPC D

New price **£167,500**

New

TIPTON, Powis Avenue

NO UPWARD CHAIN. A much improved and modernised traditional semi detached property located on the much sought after Powis Avenue in Tipton. As well as having partial gas central heating and double glazing this EXTENDED family home also benefits from, porch, entrance hallway, through lounge, extended kitchen, THREE BEDROOMS, attractive family bathroom, detached garage, enclosed rear garden, parking to front. EPC: E - SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £159,950

SEDGLEY, Gate Street

REMARKABLY SPACIOUS! - Tremendously enhanced, gas centrally heated, majority double glazed Edwardian semi detached of character excellently situated within level walking distance of Sedgley's Bull Ring comprising; lounge (with bay & cast fireplace), store, sitting room (with double French doors out to garden & cast fireplace), 19 ft kitchen with a fine range of units, lobby, toilet. Two double bedrooms, bathroom. garden, EPC: E. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £149,950

DUDLEY, Richborough Drive

OUTSTANDING SPECIFICATION! Only recently comprehensively refurbished to an exemplary standard throughout; a gas centrally heated, uPVC double glazed, "starter home" in favoured district briefly comprising; reception hall, refitted kitchen, 16'7" lounge (with patio doors), two double bedrooms, reappointed bathroom with contemporary white suite/chrome detailing, Lengthy garden, parking. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £140,000

New

TIPTON, Wood Street

A wonderfully presented traditional semi-detached property located within walking distance of Tipton town centre and benefiting from double glazing and gas central heating as well as boasting, entrance porch, hall, attractive through lounge-diner, extended kitchen, shower room, THREE BEDROOMS, landscaped rear garden, drive to front. VIEWING ESENTIAL. EPC TBA SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £139,950

New

COSELEY, Minith Road

NO UPWARD CHAIN, Benefiting from double glazing and gas central heating this semi-detached family home also comprises; entrance porch and hallway, through lounge-diner, kitchen, utility room, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom with separate W/C, garage, enclosed rear garden with driveway to fore. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY

PRICE: £129,950

COSELEY, Rainbow Street

A conveniently positioned semi-detached property located in the popular Coseley area briefly comprising; entrance hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, THREE BEDROOMS, large frontage with potential for parking and enclosed rear garden. The property is also offered with NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC: F SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £124,950

UPPER GORNAL , Kent Street

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Ideal buy-to-let investment? Spacious, uPVC double glazed, First Floor flat in established district convenient for so many amenities. Accommodation includes; reception hall, 17'9" living/dining room (possibilities of sub division?), Well equipped kitchen, TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS ,upgraded bathroom. Allocated garden (specific parking space), brick store. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £81,000

New

BILSTON, Ambleside Close, Bradley

A well-presented 'cottage style' end of terrace property ideal for first time buyers or people looking to downsize. Situated in a cul-de-sac location and overlooking the canal to the fore this house also benefits from kitchen-diner, living room, master bedroom, bathroom, parking and offered with NO UPWARD CHAIN. Viewing Essential. EPC: TBA SEDGLEY

Offersin the region of £74,950

New

KINGSWINFORD, Ragees Road

A VERY WELL PRESENTED FIRST FLOOR STUDIO FLAT surrounded by maintained gardens and grounds with CAR PARKING SPACE, offering an IMPROVED layout of ready to move into accommodation, comprising: Hall, Lounge with bay, modern fitted kitchen, Bedroom and shower room. EPC F

No upward chain **£54,950**

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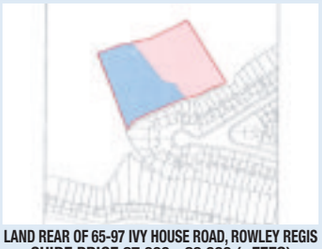

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60 Fisher Street, Tipton
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52 Commonside, Brierley Hill
3 Bed Mid Terraced House
Guide: £29,000-£34,000 (plus fees)

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SDL AUCTIONS
BIGWOOD

AUCTION
14th December 2017
at Aston Villa Football Ground

View: 1/12 @ 14:00; 4/12 @ 14:00, 6/12 @ 10:45; 9/12 @ 10:30

52 Commonside, Brierley Hill
3 bed mid terraced house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £29,000-£34,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 11:00; 2/12 @ 11:00; 4/12 @ 11:00; 6/12 @ 14:15

60 Fisher Street, Tipton
Long leasehold 2 bed duplex maisonette with central heating
Guide: £15,000 - £19,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 14:15; 4/12 @ 14:15; 6/12 @ 11:00; 8/12 @ 14:15

16 Overdale Road, Quinton
3 bed semi detached house with gardens and driveway parking
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 11:45; 4/12 @ 11:45; 6/12 @ 13:30; 8/12 @ 11:45

50 Cedar Avenue, Bilston
3 bed semi detached house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £59,000 - £64,000(plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 12:45; 4/12 @ 12:45; 6/12 @ 12:00; 9/12 @ 11:15

86 Bolton Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed house with land to the rear, with development potential, subject to planning
Guide: £29,000-£34,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 12:00; 2/12 @ 12:00; 4/12 @ 12:00; 6/12 @ 12:45

98 Ellerton Walk, Wolverhampton,
Long leasehold 3 bed duplex maisonette with part double glazing
Guide: £10,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 14:45; 4/12 @ 14:45; 6/12 @ 10:00; 9/12 @ 9:45

132 Wilkes Avenue, Walsall
3 bed semi detached house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £59,000 - £64,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 14:00; 4/12 @ 14:00, 6/12 @ 10:45; 9/12 @ 10:30

8 Riding Way, Willenhall
3 bed semi detached house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 10:00; 2/12 @ 13:30; 4/12 @ 10:00; 6/12 @ 15:15

56 Bridgelands Way, Perry Barr
3 bed duplex maisonette with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £19,000 - £24,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 10:45; 4/12 @ 10:45; 6/12 @ 14:00; 9/12 @ 13:15

30 Filey Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed end terraced house
Guide: £25,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 11:15 4/12 @ 11:15, 6/12 @ 13:30; 9/12 @ 12:45

360 Stafford Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed detached bungalow
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 10:00; 4/12 @ 10:00, 6/12 @ 14:45; 9/12 @ 12:00

112 Old Heath Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed semi detached house
Guide: £39,000-£44,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 15:15; 4/12 @ 15:15; 6/12 @ 10:00; 8/12 @ 15:15

30 Marjoram Close, Kings Norton
3 bed mid terraced town house
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

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Please note charges may apply in addition to the purchase price. Any additional fees will be confirmed in the legal pack which can be downloaded from our website, inspected at our offices or in the auction room before bidding. For a definition of Guide Price & Reserve Price please refer to our catalogue or website. For the Energy Performance Rating of each property please refer to the legal pack, our catalogue or website. Please contact our office for further details or advice.

MOTORING

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO THE BEST CARS ON THE MARKET

Trekking up Snowdonia – in a Hyundai Kona!

By Jack Evans

People travel from far and wide to tackle Snowdon. It's the highest point in the UK outside of the Scottish Highlands, and draws thousands of visitors a year who all take on the challenging task of reaching its peak.

However, it's not that often that you're given the chance to climb part of the mountain in a car. That chance, though, as Hyundai launched its Kona compact SUV in the UK, with the 'Kona 10' challenge – a task to reach 10 of the most iconic volcanic location in the UK in under 72 hours.

We'd be tackling just one section of the challenge – Snowdon. Of course, not many cars can reach the summit of Snowdon, so we'd be travelling along just a small section of the mountain to get a feel for it.

Ascent

The Miners' Track starts at Pen-y-Pass, and gives climbers a steady start to the ascent. Though rutted and rough in places, the track is regarded as one of the easier ways to begin a climb up Snowdon. Having looked at the Kona's road-ready tyres and lack of additional exterior protection, we didn't argue at using this route.

Though the Kona sits in a rather crowded segment, going up against a multitude of rivals, it's one of the few that can offer four-wheel drive.

The Miners' Track is usually closed to all vehicles, save for Snowdonia National Park trucks – making it one of the few occasions when a conventional road car had used it, so we'd be making the most of the Kona's USP.

One of the most noticeable aspects of the drive was the lack of width; the Kona may be a relatively compact car but it felt almost Land Rover-wide at certain points of the journey. We wouldn't want to be driving anything larger.

Snowdon's height and proximity to the sea means it endures some colossally bad weather – a few days prior to our arrival it had been raining sideways, according to the track guides. The day of our trip proved to be cold but only slightly damp – ideal for making your way up the mountain.

The track snakes its way gradually higher and higher. It was still open to walkers at the time of our climb, and many were startled to see a convoy of brightly coloured cars passing them – though all courteously moved out of the way. T

he route curves and the sides fall away steeply, before winding its way around Llyn Teyrn – a spectacular lake huddled within two sides of a valley. It quickly passes this by, and hooks round before arriving at Llyn Llydaw – a large lake considerably bigger than Llyn Teyrn.

In truth, the Kona was never troubled by the route. Yes, the track's diminutive width proved a little scary at points, but there was never a lack of traction nor ground clearance – both aspects that the average driver may find useful at points during daily driving. Though it's unlikely that many will take their Kona up the side of a mountain, it's useful to know that it won't falter when facing a road covered in damp leaves.

We pull up at the side of Llyn Llydaw, and remark at just how staggeringly beautiful it is. That impression quickly wears off, and we scurry back into the warmth of the Kona's cabin.

The Kona did, as well as being comfortingly warm in the chill of an Autumn-time Snowdon, prove more than capable of tackling the Miners' Track. As we mentioned, there's little chance that Kona owners will choose to take their car up Snowdon, but its four-wheel-drive

Viva Rocks this Christmas time

Featuring a raised ride height with body cladding, a robust new interior and the latest connectivity including OnStar and R 4.0 IntelliLink, Vauxhall's rugged Viva Rocks is available to order now priced from £11,530 on-the-road.

The new model features many design cues typically found on larger SUV models, such as an increased ride height that enables better visibility and improved response to uneven surfaces – such as country lanes or potholes. Ideally suited to city conditions, Viva Rocks gives occupants excellent connectivity, while retaining the practicality of the Vauxhall Viva with five doors, five seats, compact dimensions and a luggage capacity in excess of 1,000 litres.

Clever design tweaks set the car apart. Silver roof rails, rugged front (including fog lights) and rear bumpers with integrated skid pads, muscular wheel arches, and unique 15-inch bi-colour look alloy wheels, all ensure that the new model has a distinctive edge.

On the inside, there's a new interior with sophisticated touches throughout including the optional R 4.0 IntelliLink system and the availability of the personal connectivity and service assistant, OnStar,.

Five doors guarantee convenient access to the front and rear seats, which can be folded down to give the car a luggage capacity of 1,013 litres. The 'City' driving mode reduces steering effort to assist with tight manoeuvres in heavy traffic. Additional features that support the driver include Park Assist.

Revolutionary new engine is on the way from Mazda

By John Griffiths

As the pressure on motor manufacturers to help save the environment, our health and our pockets continues, there's a revolutionary new engine on the way.

The new SKYACTIV – X, which could be fitted to the first cars next year, is unique in that its fuel is petrol but it relies on compression ignition like a diesel.

Mazda's engineers have designed the engine to be leaner and greener while remaining driver-focussed, combining the best features of both types of traditional engines.

It's not that Mazda has turned off the road to electricification: its first full pure electric cars (EVs) and petrol electric hybrids, built after a deal with Toyota, will be here in the coming months.

But it's a recognition that even after 2040, when all petrol or diesel cars will have to have some element of electric motive power too, so there will still be a place for internal combustion – the more efficient the better,

Other companies are trying to achieve the same aim, with smaller capacity, turbocharged engines (such as the currently popular 1.0 litre three cylinder units) or features such as cylinder shutdown. Both measures aim to provide real-world driving performance while reducing fuel consumption while on a light throttle, such as when you're cruising.

During its testing procedures, Mazda's engineers have found that the ultra lean burn engine (which effectively doubles the ratio of air to petrol) produces between 10 and 30 per cent more torque than a conventional 2.0 litre engine.

Therefore it has the superior initial acceleration response found in diesel engines but also spins up into the higher rpm ranges as smoothly and easily as a typical petrol engine.

Due to the super lean mixture, economy is up by an average 20 per cent – or up to 30 per cent in traffic where low engine speeds are used. That's in the sort of conditions where existing, large displacement engines are at their most thirsty.

There is, of course, an awful lot of new technology involved, including an ultra high injection pressure, split fuel uinjection nozzles and control of engine temperature.

But Mazda's 'secret' is that, unlike other attempts to produce a workable compression ignition engine, it continues to use spark plugs.

"Mazda's breakthrough has been achieved by questioning the conventional idea that no spark plug is needed for compression ignition and suggesting a different approach instead," the company says.

"If switching between different combustion modes is difficult, do we really need to switch in the first place? This concept is the basis of Spark-Controlled Compression Ignition (SPCCI), Mazda's unique combustion method.

"Using SPCCI means that the range where compression ignition can take place (in terms of engine load and rpm) now covers the whole combustion range. That is to say, the potential application of compression ignition has now dramatically expanded, allowing this technology to be used in almost all driving conditions.

"In other words, because a spark plug is now being used at all times, the engine can switch seamlessly between combustion using compression ignition and combustion using spark ignition."

It also enables the fuel-air mixture to burn more evenly, making the most of the lean mixture's potential energy.

As well as the inherent improvements in fuel economy (and therefore reduced emissions) and performance, the system aids cold starting and eliminates diesel 'knock' in the higher rev ranges.

Competitive servicing at dealerships

Commercial feature

Stourbridge Motor House, T Wall, Halesowen Motor House & Dudley Motor Company, collectively known as the Black Country Dealers are part of a family-run business that has been trading in the West Midlands region for over 65 years.

The group has invested heavily over the last two years, totally refurbishing its showrooms, service and waiting areas.

Approved

Vauxhall is happy too, as the investment ensures the company matches approved standards it sets.

Additionally the dealers pride themselves on their dedicated service centres, which offer drivers and businesses in the area affordable service pricing for all makes of vehicles, plus the availability of Class 7 MoT ramps at Dudley Motor Company and T Wall, Kingswinford.

"With our Vauxhall and MasterFit services, we only use genuine Vauxhall parts, approved diagnostic equipment and fully synthetic oils so you can be sure your Vauxhall remains at its highest standard," said a spokesman.

All technicians have been fully trained by the award-winning Vauxhall National Academy so you can rest assured that your Vauxhall vehicle is being serviced by the experts.

With a Vauxhall or MasterFit service, your Vauxhall will have a full exterior wash and thorough interior vacuum so you can drive away with that "new car" feeling.

By servicing and having an MOT with the four, your Vauxhall is being dealt with by approved Vauxhall dealers, you will improve the resale value of your car, meaning more money when thinking about part-exchanging it.

"We offer three tiers of servicing for your Vauxhall. Our Valueline service for all makes and models will cover the basics and get the job done.

"However, if you want your vehicle serviced with genuine Vauxhall part replacements then the Vauxhall & MasterFit service is your best option."

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The companies have competitive service rates, to keep your Vauxhall vehicle running smoothly and efficiently and you can take out a service plan from as little as £12.99 a month to help spread the costs.

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How to improve a car's performance by 70%

The effectiveness consultancy Benchmarketing recently analysed what happens when companies include press advertising in their media mix.

They looked at more than 500 econometric models, covering a five-year period and, as the table here shows, they found that adding newspapers dramatically increases the effectiveness of other media.

In the automotive sector they reviewed companies that ranged from the big spending German goliaths of the industry to medium sized independent carmakers.

And they discovered that by adding newspaper advertising to their campaigns, they cranked up their effectiveness by over 70%.

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Affordable to buy and run with a fantastic fun factor!

Sheer driving pleasure from world's number one roadster

By John Griffiths

There are some cars that just get into your head – and your heart.

For me, one of those is the Mazda MX-5: not family friendly or overly practical, but one of the most affordable routes to sheer driving pleasure that you could wish for.

It comes as no surprise at all that this sleek roadster has been around for almost 30 years and well over a million sold, making it the world's best-selling sports car.

It's launch raised a few critical eyebrows, coming at a time when most manufacturers had dropped the concept of the two-seater sports car in favour of the 'hot hatch' – but motorists loved it.

Although the current model has been around for two years now, it is continuing to win 'best in class' awards.

There was (and still is) a purity about it. A front engined, rear drive and relatively simple car with the promise of wind-in-your-hair motoring that makes us nostalgic for the golden age of motoring.

There are five models in the range, from £18,495 to £23,695, plus the RF models which come with an electrically-folding hard roof (£22,195 to £28,995) instead of the manually operated folding soft top.

There's a choice of 1.5 litre, 131Ps or 2.0 litre, 160Ps petrol engines: both providing plenty of real-world performance for today's driving conditions. The 0 to 62mph performance figures are 8.4 and 8.6 seconds respectively, while official fuel consumption figures are a respectable 46.3 and 39.2mpg.

The MX-5 has all the modern conveniences

But a 'sports' designation and statistics apart, there's more to a car like this. I recall with genuine pleasure those times when I gave the motorway a miss in favour of a longer trip home, through leafy country lanes, at a gentle pace with the roof down. A great way to blow away the stresses of the day.

The new MX-5 is something of a rarity in that it's actually a little smaller than it's predecessor, in a move to make the car more nimble. It also benefitted from Mazda's 'SKYACTIV' technology, featuring efficient, high compression engines and a chassis/body structure which is both stronger and lighter. In fact it weighs under 1,100kgs even with an average-sized driver on board.

The rewards come by way of improved economy, lower emissions, and of course agility.

Add to that the ideal 50:50 balance of weight between front and rear, the feel and response to changes in direction of rear wheel drive and you have a car which is truly rewarding to drive. You feel a part of well-honed machine.

As well as being shorter, with minimal overhangs, this latest MX-5 has the lowest centre of gravity yet and is fitted with a limited slip differential to aid cornering.

While the MX-5 is smaller overall, there is still plenty of room in the cockpit for two adults in comfort. Luggage space, at 127 litres, is enough for a good-sized suitcase or a couple of average wheelie bags.

The test car on this occasion was a 2.0 litre in mid-range SE-L Nav trim, with an on-the-road price of £21,645. While staying true to the ethos of the traditional roadster, it came with modern convenience features such as climate control air conditioning, a colour touchscreen display for the navigation and connectivity systems (including internet systems) and the audio system. The driver has two speakers integrated into the headrest, so there's no need to annoy others even when listening to music with the roof down.

A two-seater won't suit everyone, but the MX-5 has won many hearts and minds with its combination of attributes.

It's as affordable to buy and run as some of today's rather anonymous hatchbacks, but with a fun factor they don't even approach, plus the whole world of relaxed, top down motoring when conditions allow. It's not only me – remember this car is the world's number one in its field.

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I fit Bathrooms, Outside Taps, Flat Pack, etc
Outside Taps Supplied & Fitted ONLY £55!
FREE QUOTES
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MT SKIPS & GRAB HIRE
Save £££s
All size skips and all areas covered
Same day delivery faster than
A phone call!!!
Open 7 days a week
SCRAP CARS REMOVED FOR FREE
YOU FILL 'EM WE MT 'EM
07920 88 57 74 or 01384 24 09 56

Funeral Directors

J.R. JONES
Lower Gornal 01902 880040

DAINTY & DOWNING
Dudley 01384 252772
Independent family run Funeral Directors
24 hour service
www.nedowning.co.uk

HOPCRAFTS LOW COST FAMILY FUNERAL & MEMORIALS
Inscriptions, Plaques
Buy direct from our Factory Shop.
Funerals: Adam 01902 420452
Headstones: Norah 01902 714530
or Dudley, Laura 01384 263452
www.hopcraft-funerals.co.uk
'Proudly independent'

Lost & Found

LOST LOLA on November 22, at 9.30am, black medium size slim cross bred labrador, from the Plantation area of the Railway walk Wombourne/ Hinley, collar with tag and numbers on her. **01902 895356.**

1 Family

Elderly & Disabled

Capitol Mobility Showroom located in Bath St, Bilston next to Morrisons with FREE parking
MOTABILITY DEALER
OVER 25 YEARS OF RELIABLE SALES AND SERVICES OF NEW AND USED MOBILITY EQUIPMENT, STAIRLIFTS AND ADAPTIONS, FREE HOME DEMONSTRATIONS.
01902 409929
www.capitolmobility.co.uk

MOBILITY SCOOTERS WANTED . Any condition working or not. Call 07967 003600.

WALK IN BATH unused, cost £1,200, sell £500. 01902 334541.

WREKIN STAIRLIFTS reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

2 Leisure Time

Bikes

DECATHLON ROCK RIDER mountain bike, 26" wheels, new tyres, suspension front forks, 21 gears, good condition £60. 01902 896933.

Car Boot Sales

COL'S CAR BOOT & MARKET
OPEN EVERY WEDNESDAY & SUNDAY
Open Bank Holiday Monday
at Himley Bypass, B4176
Ring Colin: 07973 904585
www.colscarboot.co.uk
@colscarboot
OPEN ALL YEAR

Caravans Wanted

CARAVAN WANTED. Can collect asap. Caravan wanted. Call me on 07717090817

LET US SELL YOUR CARAVAN/ Motorhome for you and get the best possible price. Severn Valley Leisure, DY8 4HP. 01384 390183

Caravans/ Motorhomes

CARAVAN FOR SALE in North Wales, 11¹/₂, month season, must go, 2018 fees paid. 07590 124226.

LOOK

HIGHLEY PARK HOME 12 month residential site. Park home lodge. Fabulous views, own garden and drive way. Near to Highley shops and bus stop. **£89,000. 07774 715830.**

holidays

Caravan Sales

A CHOICE OF CARAVANS FOR sale from £1995 to £6995, accessory shop, service, repairs, storage. Severn Valley Leisure Stourbridge, DY8 4HP 01384 390183 www.severnvalleyleisure.com

Travel Abroad

READERS ARE REMINDED to check with any Advertisers that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

Sports & Leisure

FreeAds
IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY
For items upto £250.
Online at
bookanad.
expressandstar.co.uk

what's on

Antique Fairs

ANTIQUE/COLLECTORS FAIR Kinver Comm Centre, Sun 3rd December (also Bromsgrove every Fri) EST 1979 Waverley. Next Book Fair Sun 17th Dec. Home made refreshments. 0121 550 4381

ANTIQUE/ VINTAGE FAIR
CALFHEATH HALL, CALFHEATH
CANNOCK, WV10 7DW
SUNDAY DECEMBER 3RD
9 AM - 15:30 PM
07783 680 627

Christmas Events

CHRISTMAS FAYRE at Swindon Community Centre Saturday, December 2 11am - 1pm Stalls, tombola, refreshments, Free Admission.

Table Top Sale

INDOOR BOOT SALE AND COLLECTIBLES Sunday, 12th, 19th and 26th November and Sunday 3rd and 10th December. £10 per table. Wordsley Community Centre (behind library) 9am to 1pm. **07852 706533. Raising money for Birmingham Children's Hospital.**

3 Home & Services

Household Appliances

CAPLE GAS HOB unused, 4 burner, controls on right hand side. Guaranteed. £200. 0121 585 7210 / 07763 226415.

FLAVEL EMBERGLOW CLASSIC Gas fire, chimney type, as new, still in box, purchased in error, full 7yr guarantee. £350. 01299 871204.

Items Wanted

WANTED VINTAGE / COLLECTABLE TOYS
Star Wars / TV / Film Related/ Horror/ Memorabilia
Email or call
rewindcollectables@gmail.com
07969 050421.

A BEST CASH PRICE

FOR ALL RAILWAY COLLECTIONS Any gauge or age Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/ Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/ any live steam. Also Die Cast, Corgi, Dinky, Spot On. **01384 836219/07891 713547 thetrainmaster67@ hotmail.com**

AUTO MEMORABILIA WANTED
SHELL, ESSO, CASTROL ETC
ALSO
GARAGE CLEARANCES
Old Enamel Signs,
Petrol Cans,
Old Jugs,
Bikes and Motorbikes.
Anything old.
**** TOP PRICES PAID ****
01384 836219/07891 713547

CASH PAID NOW! WANTED TOOLS
Hand Tools, Anything considered
01543 452 491
07539 340307

COINS, MEDALS, BANK NOTES Wanted by private collector. Telephone 01902 676540.

OMEGA WATCHES wanted by collector, any condition considered, please call Ken anytime on **07984 047597**

READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

WANTED
VINTAGE TAMIYA REMOTE CONTROL MODELS
Also any old radio controlled models in any condition, Mardave, Kyocho, Traxxas, HPi Team Associated, Schumacher
Big or small collections bought.
07568 585075 or 0121 532 2544.

WANTED Old charm sideboard, must be in excellent condition. 07900 736387 / 0121 557 6146.

BUY LOCAL SELL LOCAL
01902 317878
ClassifiedAds

In Your Garden

BRIERLEY HILL SHEDS
Manufacturers and Suppliers of Heavy duty sheds/summerhouses
6x4 sheds prices from £255 | 8x6 summerhouses from £495
1" flooring,13mm t/g, no osb boards used All sizes available
Come and view before you buy
One tonne sack soft wood logs £50
Unit 8 Dawley Brook Road
Kingswinford DY6 7BD
01384 400089

Items For Sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

Loans

READERS ARE REMINDED that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

t.v. / home entertainment

Service

AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST Any TV Repairs. Digital aerials, sky, CCTV cameras. TV wall mounts and TV set ups. 07850 330251.

specialists at your service

Alarms/Security

PREMIER ALARMS
Supplied and Fitted £249
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

Aerials

AA DIGITAL AERIALS
AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99
01902 858191 • 01384 429166
01543 439095 • 01922 716029

A AERIAL AND SKY SPECIALIST Digital aerials, CCTV cameras, TV wall mount fitted. 07850 330251.

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!

"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"
Steve - AA Digital Aerials
For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

CLEAR VISION AERIALS Freeview, FreeSat, Sky, CCTV. Aerials from £79. Dishes from £79. OAP DISCOUNT. Tel: 01902 752036.

ALAN JONES
THE ORIGINAL AERIAL SPECIALIST, THE BEST!
Est 1955 - 59 years at the top!
Recommended by thousands
Genuine, honest, 100% reliable
WE HAVE WATCHED THEM ALL COME AND GO
Call: 01902 885985
ANY PROBLEM SOLVED

Appliance Repairs

A SAME DAY REPAIR - Cookers Autos Fridges Vacs and Micros. Call 07900 578897 / 07801 746853.

Building Services

G & D BUILDERS
Over 35 years exp
All aspects of building work
Extensions, loft conversions, roofing, driveways & landscaping.
All work guaranteed
07837 994465 / 01902 579592

MAKE SOME EXTRA
CASH FOR CHRISTMAS
Sell your unwanted items with Classifieds
ONLY £9.99**
FOR 6 NIGHTS IN PRINT AND ONLINE IN YOUR LOCAL EXPRESS & STAR.
✔ No hidden costs
✔ Buyer collects
✔ No postage or returns
✔ Local sellers to local people
✔ It's that simple!!
Call us on 01902 317878
or book online at bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk
** Private advertisers only
No pets, livestock, property or personals
ClassifiedAds

Cleaning

Sparkle Clean
Cleaning, Painting & Handyman Services
Fully Insured A standard of Excellence
Office or Household cleaning
Discounted rates for regular customers
FREE Enquiries & quotes call
07818 238893 DBS Checked

Domestic Cleaning

CLEAN (midlands ltd) FOR YOU
Domestic Cleaning & Ironing Service.
Friendly, Reliable & Trustworthy.
Call Anita on: 07854 163 804.

Domestic Repairs & Services

SAME DAY Low Cost Repairs. Washers, Dryers Electric Cookers. 12 mths guarantee. 07850 355552.

Drain Clearance

ALL DRAIN AND SEWER Blockages cleared fast. Call Fast Clean: 01902 736424.

Driveways & Patios

CRETE BY DESIGN
Concrete Imprinting
* BLOCK PAVING * TARMACING
* RESIN DRIVES FREE QUOTES
01902 489633 (day)
or 01902 604187 (eve)

Electrical Services

A BARGAIN REWIRE, fuseboards, cctv, alarms, showers, NICEIC. 01902 842739 / 07783 471949.

ALL ELECTRICAL work from a switch to a rewire. Insured, free quote 01902 575570 / 07958 627434.

ALL HOME ELECTRICS NAPIT registered. Fully insured. For a free quote call 07583 320318.

Gas Fitting

A BOILER BREAKDOWN, COOKER, FIRE,
FITTED-SERVICED-REPAIRED
Landlord certs.
All areas covered.
J&E Heating.
Call John:
01902 562664
/07969 687832

GAS SERVICES
- Boilers • Cookers
- Fires • Gas Checks
- Landlord Certificates
- Gas Leaks Traced

Fitted, Serviced and Repaired
Same Day Service
Free Quotes
DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs
Call: 01902 366855/
07761 973975

READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered.
It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

Guttering

PROPERTY SOLUTIONS
A*1 GUTTERING
cleaned, repaired, replaced, facias/soffits, UPVC washdowns, all roofing/repointing work. Free quotes, 8am-8pm
01902 722447

Fencing

ACE FENCING. A better quality panel. Supply/fit. Free quote: 31 Bank St. WV10 9DU.01902 723910

PORTWAY FENCING
SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards £695
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm
Sat 8am - 12noon
83 Portway Rd, W'bury
DELIVERY AVAILABLE
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!

"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representatives and would recommend them to anyone! They have done a very professional job with my website so I get online enquiries as well now."
Michael- Portway Fencing

For great business results call
01902 319 191
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CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!

"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representatives and would recommend them to anyone! They have done a very professional job with my website so I get online enquiries as well now."
Michael- Portway Fencing

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
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Handyman Services

YOUR LOCAL HANDYMAN
FREE QUOTES
All work guaranteed, Most trades covered, References available on request. No job too big or too small!
CALL MIKE: 07947 621047
0121 6010479

House Clearances

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. 07852 172641 / 07710 360327

Oven Cleaning

AAA OVEN CLEANING. Ovens, Hobs, Aga / Range / Micro / Extractors. 01902 689418 / 07910 921736

Painters/ Decorators

C I PAINTING & DECORATING Over 30 yrs experience.City & Guilds approved. Free Quotes. 07913 732756 or 01902 650716.

LOVE 2 WALLPAPER
Reliable & Friendly, Professional
Female Painters & Decorators
Attention to detail, competitive prices.
For the Perfect Finish with minimum hassle.
Plastering & Coving Work Undertaken
01384 287577 or 07812 484194
www.love-2-wallpaper.co.uk

CALL M & B DECORATORS
City & Guilds
No job too small
Free Quote
01902 494555

Plans Prepared

ADAM DESIGN, Building Plans. Drawn and submitted to council. Tel: 01902 620200 / 07841 654037. Email: adamdesign@sky.com

BUILDING Plans: Prepared/submitted. K J Bradley 01902 373248 07792 165767. www.plans4u.co.uk

Plastering

STEVES PLASTERING SERVICE Clean and Reliable, All Work Undertaken, All Areas. Call 0121 567 5919 / 07977 262943.

Plumbers

G M PLUMBING SERVICES Complete Bathrooms, Kitchens, Taps Showers,Blockages 07976 012468

Plumbing & Heating

Keiron Jones Plumbing & Heating
Full heating systems £2200
Boiler Changes £1100
Longer warranty available upon request, fires and surrounds also available.
For Free Quotes Call:
01902 403823 07811 855231

Removals

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

KT HOUSE REMOVALS
12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

KINGSWINFORD REMOVALS AND HOUSE CLEARANCES
We move anything.
Professional service,
45 years' experience,
DFS approved and we take the stress away.
Please call:
07966 281957

A CHEAPER REMOVAL
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL REMOVALS.
FULLY INSURED. 7 days.
01902 89 49 16
07807 77 30 35
FREE QUOTES
Student/OAP Discounts

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WH ROOFING CONTRACTORS
A backed bargain, slate, tile, flat, lead work, fascias and gutterwork, Free Quotes
Call: 01902 561434 or
07792 817062
E:whroofingcontractor@mail.com

COMPTON ROOFING
Tiled, Slate, Flat. New and Repairs Ridge/Hip and Verges Re-bedded. Chimney rebuilding/repointing. Dry ridge and hip systems
07976 419915, 01902 448032

25% OFF SF ROOFING & GUTTERING
25 YEARS EXPERIENCE!
Flat, Main roofs, rubber or felt, repaired and replaced, all repointing. Guttering repaired and replaced.
BEAT ALL QUOTES GUARANTEED
Call Sean 01902 829158 8am to 8pm

MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

Rubbish Removal

LETS TALK RUBBISH No Skips Needed,Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

Skip Hire

AN ABSOLUTE AFFORDABLE CASTLE SKIP HIRE
Mini, midi and large skips
GRAB HIRE AND MINI DIGGER AVAILABLE
01384 237577
01902 405745
07719 671845

BIG JOHN MOVES RUBBISH! No Skips, we load, fast friendly service, 25 Lister Rd, Dudley DY2 8JR, Est 35 years, 01384 232359.

Grinsells Skip Hire LTD
Mini, Midi, Maxi, Large Skips.
Monday to Friday.
Saturday half day.
0121 555 6060

AT M&M SKIPS
Fast, friendly service
All areas covered
All sizes
Same day service
Freephone
0800 619 0189 / 07904 915016

STONES SKIP HIRE 0121 557 1480 / 07886 721875 www.stoneskiphire.co.uk

Tiling

BOBS HOME INTERIORS
Wall and floor Tiling
Bathrooms Fitted
FREE ESTIMATES
bob2granger@gmail.com
07480 141537
www.bobshomeinteriors.co.uk

Upholstery

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!

"I am very happy with my Express & Star and Chronicles Advertising Campaign, also by using the local directory on expressandstar.com we are seeing benefits from visitors to our website."
Gary Downes - Bilston Upholstery

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

4 Pets & Animals

Equestrian Corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

Guns & Dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

Pets Corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

CHRISTMAS TREE STAR APPEAL
Have you got or did have a much loved pet to share your Christmas with, if so would you like to help our rescue dogs this Christmas by putting a star on our tree.
We will put his / her name on the star for small sum of £2.
All donations will help our rescue dogs find a new and loving home.
Animal Samaritans / Border Collie Rescue, Round House Horderley, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 8HT.
01588 676106.

GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS
All neutered, innoculated and microchipped.
Call 01902 291080 or visit
www.gtwolverhampton.co.uk
Greyhound Trust Wolverhampton
@gtwolverhampton

KIND HOMES WANTED
Rocket, 6 month old Border Collie type dog, boy, black and white.
Misty, 2 year old female, black and white Border Collie, failed working dog, very pretty.
Buster and Bobby, 7 years old male Border Collie's, need to go together, both partially sited and rely on each other.
They are both lovely affectionate dogs, house trained and good on the lead.
Darcy, very old St Bernard Cross needs end of life foster home, all expenses paid.
www.dogsamaritans.org.uk and for information on 01588 676106.

ROSEDENE RESCUE CENTRE
1, Radley Road, Rushall, Walsall. WS4 1LN.
01922 627013.
Open Monday to Saturday
11am - 5pm.
Sundays - Bank Holidays
11am - 4pm.
Takes in relinquished dogs from owners, all areas (if they are vet checked/up to date with jabs.)
Donations of dog food, toys, bedding and vet bills always appreciated.

5 Business & Farming

business directory

Accountants

ACCOUNTANCY SERVICES for Small Business. Competitive Rates. Call 01902 882600

Commercial Premises

UNITS AND OFFICE SPACE to let in Oldbury, West Bromwich and Walsall. Easy Terms. Ashmore Properties 0121 520 5318.

Business Opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

6 Property

Overseas Property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

Properties Wanted

Yes! HOME BUYERS
THE EASY WAY TO SELL YOUR HOUSE
We Buy Houses For Cash
Free Valuation? Yes! No Fees? Yes! Any Location? Yes!
Fast Sale? Yes! Any House? Yes! Any Condition? Yes!
Get your FREE, instant cash offer today!
The Property Ombudsman
Call 01384 913 543
or text "Cash" to 66777 yeshomebuyers.com

I WILL BUY YOUR HOUSE
• Any Price • Any Condition • Any Area
Call Paula 01384 467643
We are not connected to any other advertiser
www.webuyhouseswestmidlands.co.uk

Accommodation To Let

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

SMART SINGLE ROOMS in Shared house, Netherton. £85 p.w. inc. bills. No DSS. 2 weeks deposit. **07940 116130.**

7 Jobs

Building & Construction

PAINTERS & DECORATORS Required Direct, Subcontract. CSCS, Time-Served, immediate start. Tel: 01562 751197 / 07836 557894 Email info@pvc-ltd.co.uk

Courses

DRIVER C.P.C TRAINING either Telford or our Wednesbury office £39.99 +upload fee. Please contact Ian Jones 07950159094

Engineering

MORQUIP LIMITED Require a Plater / Welder / General Machinist for a small engineering company manufacturing own products.
Please contact V Dhanjan / T Dunn on 01384 410801. Morquip Ltd, Unit 4 Spinners End Ind Est, Oldfields, Cradley Heath, B64 6BS.

Part Time - General

NEWS DELIVERERS
needed around the Tiled House Lane area of Brierley Hill.
Please Contact
Customer Services on 0800 174 064

CV MATCHING. IT'S QUICK, EASY AND FREE
Real opportunities for you
jobs.expressandstar.com

Full Time General

Do you fancy a career change, have you ever thought of a career in care?
Inshore Support

If so we may be able to help.
We provide care and support for people with complex and challenging behaviour.
Our services based in the West Midlands area have the following vacancies at our residential and supported living homes based in Wolverhampton, Stourbridge, Halesowen, Dudley and Coventry areas.

SENIOR SUPPORT:
Applicants should have 2 years minimum experience & NVQ Level 3 or be working towards this qualification. Salary £9.00 per hour.

SUPPORT WORKER DAYS
We currently have vacancies for daytime support workers, no experience is necessary as training will be provided. Salary £8.00 per hour.

Call our office 01384 421460 for an application pack or email stephaniesmith@inshoresupportltd.co.uk

MIDSTEEL PLANTS & FITTINGS LTD

Midsteel Flanges and Fittings Ltd
A leading UK stockholder servicing the oil, gas and process industries seeks an enthusiastic and self motivated

SALES PERSON

Active experience of selling Flanges and Pipe Fittings is a prerequisite for consideration for this role
Full time position
Competitive salary

Email applications with a covering letter and full CV to sales@Midsteel.com
Closing date for applications
Friday 15th December
www.midsteel.com

Full Time General

Star Employment services

Our client based in Snowhill, Birmingham is currently looking for a number of vacancies for their solicitor firm.

Corporate Senior Associate/Director - Circa £60,000

Commercial Property Solicitor - Circa £32,000

Construction Senior Associate - £45,000 - £55,000

Private Client Senior Associate - £45,000 - £55,000

Residential Conveyancer - £35,000

*salary dependant on experience

For further information please contact Star Employment Services on 01902 319 333 or send CV to jobs@staremploymentservices.co.uk

8 Motoring

Cars Over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

AUDI TT 225
Silver. 2000 model.
Full leather.
Excellent condition.
Full MoT.
Owned by Jaguar Technician.
£1,975 ono.
07474 057704.

4X4

BMW X3 3.0 SD

M Sport auto, 2008, silver with black leather, usual refinements, loads of history, totally prestine condition, 195k but looks and drives like 50k.

£5,995.

07411 414284.

FORD FIESTA
2010, 66,700 miles, 5 door, petrol, fsh. Magenta, one prior owner. HPI clear. Long MoT. Immaculate throughout. Ideal family or first car.
£3,495 ono.
01902 674550.

Cars Over £1500

EXCELLENT CONDITION

FORD FIESTA ECOBOOST
64 reg, 5dr titanium, two owners, 24,000 miles, many extras, excellent condition,
£5,600.
07379 214411.

FORD FIESTA ZETEC
2007, 1.4 TDCi, 64,000 miles, blue, fsh, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, alarm, long MoT, excellent condition.
£1,995.
01902 744023.

FORD FOCUS TITANIUM
Metallic black, 1.8.
Diesel, automatic lights and wipers, Sony Bluetooth audio hands free system.
96,000 miles.
Good condition.
£2,200 ono.
07976 979507.

EXCELLENT CONDITION

HONDA CIVIC 1.8
2007, petrol, 93,000 miles, MoT March 2018, excellent condition, service history.
£2,550.
07814 091378.

Cars Over £1500

MAZDA RX8
Superb condition, Mileage 37,425. MOT Aug 2018. Cruise control. Rear half black leather upholstery with Recaro front seats.
£6,500 ono
07505 257585

MINI COOPER 1.6
2011, 41,000 miles, black, petrol, electric windows, air bag, air con, MoT till 2018, central locking, alloys, stereo, CD, part service history.
£7,000 ono.
07521 281140.

MINI ONE
Bargain Mini one 2008, 1.4 engine, ideal first car, long MoT, stop/start, radio/CD, alloys, ew, em, alarm, **£1950.**
07538 201939.

NISSAN NAVARA OUTLAW

2009, 2.5DCi manual, twin cab pick up with cover for rear goods carrier, alloys, new tyres, side steps, roof rails, electric windows and sunroof, electric heated seats, tow bar, dark grey metallic with grey leather £1,000's been spent on it, exceptionally clean, 179,000 miles, excellent driver, may consider PX.

£5,750 ono

07836 204450.

BARGAIN

PEUGEOT 107
2011 reg, petrol,
8 months MoT, £20 tax,
Must be seen.
Excellent condition.
£1,595.
07377 981431.

BARGAIN

PEUGEOT 207
1.6 HDi SPORT
2010, 5dr,
71k miles, excellent condition, very economical,
£30 road tax.
£2,250.
07976 359922.

PEUGEOT 207 MILLESIM 75
2010 60 plate.
Only 51700 miles, 10 months MoT, petrol, 1396cc.
Lovely blue colour.
Excellent condition.
£2,150 ono
07396 030022.

RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE

2008, 51,000 miles, diesel £30 a year tax, electric mirrors, air con, long MoT, central locking, pas, CD.

Very good condition.

£2,299

07879403302

VOLKSWAGEN FOX 1.2
Three door.
Hatchback.
2010 (60 reg).
Red. Petrol.
Manual. MoT November 2018.
Insurance Group 1.
66,000 miles.
Two keys.
Excellent condition.
£2,050 ono.
07871 521216.

VW GOLF MATCH
2014, 14,300 miles, 1.6 diesel, red, 5 door, parking sensors, alloys, lady owner. Exceptional condition inside and out.

£10,850

07772 095031.

Motorbikes

LOOK

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10 Personals

General

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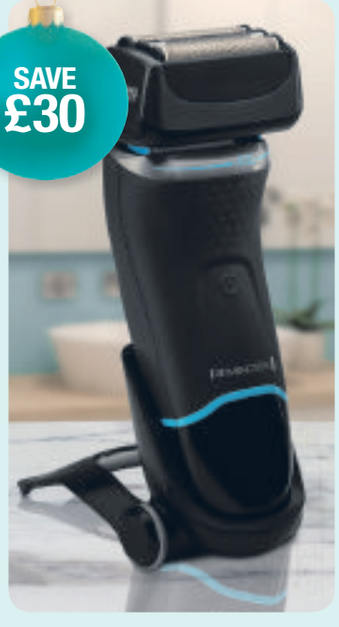

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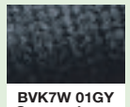

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Book on boss Taylor set for publication

THE biography of the former Villa, Wolves and England boss Graham Taylor was being released this week. Sir Elton John has provided the foreword for the book, Graham Taylor: In His Own Words, which was going on sale today (Thursday). Published by Peloton, it is available as a hardback, priced £19.99

Taylor, who passed away aged 72 in January, had been working on the publication since 2014 with journalist Lionel Birnie. It was completed with support from Taylor's family. His widow Rita said it had been a 'very important' project for him.

The book covers Taylor's playing days at Grimsby Town and Lincoln City and into his managerial career, guiding Watford from the Fourth Division to the top flight, on to Villa and then as national boss. It goes on to cover England's failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup, and the impact of subsequent press coverage on his family – before restoring his reputation as club boss with spells at Wolves and back at Watford.

Mayor leads pitch as 3G facilities unveiled

THE Mayor Sandwell was officially unveiling two 3G artificial grass pitches at the George Salter Academy this week. Councillor Ahmadul Haque was launching the facilities yesterday (Wednesday).

The project was made possible thanks to a £462,000 grant from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund, which is delivered by the Football Foundation. The pitches will replace two existing sand-dressed AGPs, which were in poor condition due to age, with new floodlit all-weather playing surfaces.

They will not only benefit the Academy's students, but also partner clubs Tantany Lions FC and Greets Green Albion FC who train and play there and are expected to introduce 14 new teams collectively.

Founded in 2000, the Football Foundation is the largest sports charity in the UK funded by the Premier League, The FA and Government, via Sport England. It develops new and refurbished facilities in order to improve the quality and experience of playing sport at grassroots level.

Captain at double in England success

SKIPPER Steph Houghton led by example as England Women roared to a 4-0 World Cup qualifying success over Bosnia & Herzegovina at Walsall's Banks's Stadium last Friday night.

Houghton netted twice in front of a sell-out crowd, with Manchester City team-mate Nikita Parris and Chelsea's Fran Kirby also on target.

A first victory for caretaker boss Mo Marley kept England hot on the heels of Group One leaders Wales ahead of Tuesday's game against Kazakhstan at Colchester.

Houghton headed England into a 19th-minute lead following Alex Greenwood's corner. England's Barcelona striker Toni Duggan was denied by the woodwork and Danielle Carter squandered a golden chance.

Less than a minute into the second period, Duggan set up Parris to make it 2-0. Houghton fired her second direct from a 54th-minute free-kick and after Aida Hadzic fouled Carter in the area, Kirby completed the scoring from the penalty spot.

Morgan Gibbs-White played a key role in England's under-17s' World Cup triumph

How Ron also played his part for World Cup heroes

Getting stuck in – Wolves legend Ron Flowers, right, in action

WOLVES youngster Morgan Gibbs-White played a key role as England's under-17s spectacularly triumphed at last month's World Cup.

The winger netted against the USA in the quarter-finals before scoring again in the final as the Three Lions came from behind to hammer Spain 5-2.

It's a result that has led to England fans dreaming the young starlets may one day replicate their form for the senior side. And it seems whenever the national side does triumph on the world stage, a Wolves player is at the heart of it.

Of course, England's one and only major tournament win came at the World Cup on home turf in 1966. And while Wolves legend Ron Flowers didn't kick a ball in anger at that tournament, he certainly played his part.

Spotted as a teenager by scouts while playing for Doncaster Rovers, Flowers joined Wolves in 1952.

Convince

Initially boss Stan Cullis had to convince Ron's father Jack to allow him to sign – with his dad preferring his son stayed in Yorkshire to continue an apprenticeship with train firm LNER Locomotive.

But Ron and Stan got their way and for the next 15 years Flowers became integral to a Wolves side that enjoyed huge success.

Playing at either wing-half or centre-half, he formed an outstanding partnership with Peter Broadbent. And that formed the bedrock of the Wolves teams that won the League Championship in 1954, 1958 and 1959, as well as the FA Cup in 1960.

In total, Flowers made 512 appearances for the club between 1952 and 1967, scoring 37 goals – putting him sixth in the club's all-time list of appearance makers.

His form in gold and black also allowed him to shine on the international stage.

In 49 appearances for England, Flowers scored 10 goals and played in the 1962 World Cup.

But in an exclusive interview he said there was a particular reason why he was included in Sir Alf Ramsey's triumphant squad in 1966.

As the oldest member of the group, Flowers revealed he was there to set an example. "I was there to do a job," he said.

"As far as I had been concerned, my England career was finished. I hadn't been expecting the call."

Flowers also came a whisker away from playing in the biggest game in English football.

Before the final in 1966, Jack Charlton had told Ramsey he was struggling with a cold. And that prompted the boss to put Flowers on stand-by.

"The message was, be ready," explains Flowers.

"It was not, as you might expect however, the cause of any nerves, or indeed a restless night. It didn't make any difference to my thinking.

Private

"I knew whatever he might have come down with, he would play.

"Do you really think Jack Charlton was going to miss out on the World Cup final because of a cold?

"It would have needed to have been one heck of a cold."

In those days, players who didn't play in the final didn't receive a winner's medal.

But Flowers' role in England's greatest achievement would eventually be acknowledged.

In 2009, Prime Minister Gordon Brown invited all 10 players who missed out to Downing Street for a private reception.

They were then finally presented with a medal which they got to parade on the pitch at Wembley at half-time during England's clash with Andorra.

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

"As far as I had been concerned, my England career was finished. I hadn't been expecting the call."

Sport

Wolves legend Flowers' key part in World Cup win

Page 43

Glassboys claim scalp to progress

Stourbridge 2 Bradford PA 1

CUP kings Stourbridge claimed another higher division scalp after beating Bradford Park Avenue in the FA Trophy and will travel to Leamington for the first round proper on December 16.

A Shane Killock own goal and Luke Shearer strike ensured the Glassboys made progress in Monday night's replay following a 1-1 draw at Park Avenue on Saturday.

Stour were dominant in the first half but were denied by some good goalkeeping from Steve Drench.

Shearer thought he had won Stourbridge a penalty early on when he clashed with Mark Ross in the penalty area but the winger was shown a yellow card for simulation.

Luke Benbow had a 25-yard free-kick well saved by Drench and then the keeper did well to deny Leon Broadhurst.

But Drench had no answer in the 49th minute from a Tom Tonks long throw as his own defender Killock diverted a header into the top corner.

Broadhurst had a golden chance to make it two but headed over from six yards after Perry had nodded Benbow's cross into his path.

Shearer used his pace to power through the Bradford defence before calmly slotting past Drench in the 69th minute to make it 2-0. Bradford, of the National League North, made it a nervy finale when Adam Boyes scored.

● The replay was forced when Nicky Clee levelled Kyle Perry's strike in Saturday's game.

From Baggeridge to Benidorm for the blue hoops

ATHLETES from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club were at two very different locations beginning with B last weekend.

A group of blue hoops took part in the Suicide 6 at Baggeridge Park under the Action Heart banner for Russells Hall Hospital's cardiac charity – a very tough route over the park's highest point before following the clay road and then down towards Himley Hall, followed by a further two miles back towards Baggeridge and a climb of 100 plus steps of Jacobs Ladder and a sprint finish.

First home for DK was Gary Bonner in 42.29, 33rd place. Stephen Parr recorded a course PB in 46.36 in 94th place.

Others were Dave Norman, Mark Gatenby, Sergej Ljubovnikov, Helen Tromans, Darren Marklew, Andy Weaver, Cindy Froggatt, John Andrews, Helen Hickman, Lisa Kendrick, Jane Campbell, Mark Bailey and Tracey O'Donaghue. Paula Pallant, Ingrid Cain and Jane Somerville went round hand in hand.

The other location was Benidorm, for a race over a similar distance of 10k. Tony Noke finished in 476th in 54.37 and Helen Noke was 713th in 1.05.03.

Martial artists belt up to make grade

The black belts, Fitz Gordon and Justin Thomas

TEN martial artists have become 1st dan black belts after passing their grading with flying colours.

Jake Allen Brunn, Ellis Homer, Luke Stanley, William Beard, Rowan Meacher, Alex Montkon, Ben Gowland, Greg Gowland, Yoel Perry and Henry Johnston are all members of Young Gloves Karate and undertook the grading on November 18.

A club spokesman said all had performed incredibly well for the grading, under extreme pressure for more than three hours in front of guest examiner, Sensei Fitz Gordon, 6th Dan.

"The standard, as with years gone by, was incredibly high with many getting distinction and merits for their skills," the spokesman added.

Young Gloves Karate established itself in 1999 at Cookley school with 20 pupils.

It now teaches more than 350 students in 13 different schools, including in Stourbridge, and boasts English karate champions and European Champions in traditional karate.

OAK FELLED AS DK GO SECOND

DK 35 Moseley Old Oak 15

DK moved up to second in the Midlands West 1 after securing a try bonus point.

Both games against Moseley Oak were tight affairs last season and each side won away from home.

Another close encounter was on the cards here when both sides scored in the opening 10 minutes.

The first try came from DK, a flowing move along their line with Ryan Smitheman scoring wide out on the left wing after a dummy to Luke Trevis opened up a gap for himself, Sam Vaughan slotted the first of his five conversions.

Moseley Oak were able to redress the balance as they drove over the line and the try was converted.

Callum Nicholls was next on the scoresheet, with Vaughan on target for the extras.

DK were taking control of the game and Trevis ran in the third try, again converted by Vaughan.

Oak were down to 14 men with a straight red card for a high tackle on Trevis, who left the field to be replaced by Mitch Grealey.

Pressure

The third quarter of the game saw the 14 men of the Oak put in a shift, and they held DK, and started to apply some pressure mainly through their forwards who were always willing to truck the ball up. After 17 minutes of the half, Matt Squire was yellow carded following a period of intense DK defence.

Oak continued to press and they eventually scored a second close range try and a penalty to make it 21-15 meant the DK faithful were getting nervous.

However, the hosts were about to take control in the final quarter and Smitheman ran in the bonus point try, Vaughan converting.

Into the final few minutes with the scoreboard in their favour a period of DK possession was finally converted into points when Tommy Walker ran to the line for a well-deserved try, and Sam Vaughan made it a perfect day with the boot.

Dan's the man for England call

Daniel Eccles of Dudley will represent England

A YOUNG Dudley martial artist has become the first from a Staffordshire club to be picked to represent England.

Daniel Eccles, aged 16, has been training at Ryu Shotokan Karate Club – which runs classes in Cannock and Stafford – for three years and has been selected to represent England at the European Championships in Russia in February.

Eccles – who goes to Dudley College – got involved in karate at the age of nine and is now a second dan black belt.

Club coach Mike Carr said: "Dan is the first England representative at the club. He has been working very hard and is getting his just rewards."

Eccles cannot wait to represent England, insisting it has been a dream of his since starting out in the martial art. Going over to Russia does not faze him as he has competed in tournaments in Sweden and Germany before.

"It's been a dream of mine since I was young," said Eccles. "I'm over the moon, I've always wanted to represent England – especially on such a big stage.

"I've been at Ryu for two years and Mike has really been pushing me hard. There were a few trials over a few weeks for the England selection. It's quite a long process, takes a lot of effort, but it's definitely worth it.

"I need to push myself even harder now."

My time has come, insists boxer Clarke

HALESOWEN'S super middleweight sensation Lennox Clarke believes his time has finally come.

The 26-year-old is ready to make up for lost time when he challenges Jahmaine Smyle for the vacant International Boxing Organisation Continental Super Middleweight Title on Saturday.

The bout will take place in Smyle's hometown at the Leicester Arena as part of Cyclone Promotions' bumper All Or Nothing Show, topped with Sweden's undefeated European super lightweight champion Anthony Digit defending his belt against Wiltshire's former English champion Joe Hughes.

After seeing his own English Title shot stall, Clarke is determined to steal the show, which will be aired live on Channel 5. "This is my time now," exclaimed Clarke. "I've been waiting for a while for a title shot and finally it's here.

"Jahmaine is strong and tough and aggressive. I'm ready to put in a performance and bring that belt home."

'All Or Nothing' also features Commonwealth cruiserweight King Luke Watkins. 'The Duke' makes his first defence against Southport's former British title challenger Mike Stafford, while unbeaten Wolverhampton bantamweight Kyle Williams will fight for the fourth time this year.

Lichfield super flyweight Brad Foster, Josh Quailey, and Chantelle Cameron complete the card. Tickets can be purchased from http://www.cyclonepromotions.com

Yeltz slip closer to bottom after loss

Matlock Town 2 Halesowen 0

HALESOWEN Town slipped to defeat at Matlock and are just four points off bottom club Sutton Coldfield.

Yeltz had to do without Ivor Lawton for most of the game after he went off injured on 13 minutes.

The unmarked Ted Cribley headed Matlock into the lead five minutes before the break. Three minutes later, poor defending let Jake Green in for the second.

Danny Bragoli had a goal ruled out for offside on 58 minutes.

Daniel Udoh has returned to League Two side Crewe after completing his successful loan spell.

★★★

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